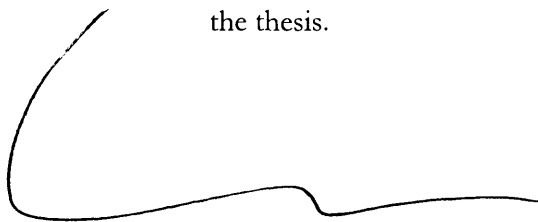


Popular music and narratives of identity in Croatia since 1991

Catherine Baker

UCL

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Abstract

This thesis employs historical, literary and anthropological methods to show how narratives of identity have been expressed in Croatia since 1991 (when Croatia declared independence from Yugoslavia) through popular music and through talking about popular music. Since the beginning of the war in Croatia (1991-95) when the state media stimulated the production of popular music conveying appropriate narratives of national identity, Croatian popular music has been a site for the articulation of explicit national narratives of identity. The practice has continued into the present day, reflecting political and social change in Croatia (e.g. the growth of the war veterans lobby and protests against the Hague Tribunal).

The cultural boundaries of the nation were also subject to contestation and challenge according to symbolic value judgements of what was and was not considered 'Croatian'. Various aspects of popular music (e.g. instruments, vocal styles) were constructed as symbols of inclusion and exclusion in this discourse, and several attempts were made by professional interest groups to promote certain genres as a basis for a national style of popular music. The nationalisation of cultural space also entailed the marginalisation of music/musicians from other ex-Yugoslav republics (especially Serbia) with ethno-nationally ambiguous connotations. An examination of what have become transnational cultural flows shows the continued interdependence of the ex-Yugoslav states and markets.

The thesis combines analysis of Croatian press sources and song lyrics themselves with ethnographic material drawn from 35 weeks of fieldwork in Zagreb and Slavonia. Interviews and participant observation of musical events are used to analyse the importance of music in narrating individual as well as collective identity.

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1 Introduction and literature review

1.1 Background

This thesis explores how narratives of identity were proposed and contested through popular music, and with reference to popular music, in Croatia between 1991 (when Croatia declared independence from Yugoslavia) and 2008. During this period Croatia experienced serious political, social, cultural and economic upheaval, most seriously because of the 1991–95 war. In summer 1991 the escalating tensions in the relationship between Croatia, Serbia and Croatian Serbs in Krajina and eastern Slavonia developed into war, and they were further complicated by Croatian involvement in the war in Bosnia (1992–95). The war in Croatia (the ‘Homeland War’) officially ended in August 1995 after two Croatian Army operations (‘Oluja’ and ‘Bljesak’ – ‘Storm’ and ‘Flash’) into Serb-occupied territory. The deaths of Serb civilians in these operations and earlier in the war led to allegations of ethnic cleansing and genocide, and occasioned war crimes trials at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and in Serbian and Croatian courts. One occupied area, eastern Slavonia, remained under United Nations transitional administration (UNTAES) even after the war and did not pass under Croatian state sovereignty until January 1998. The 1990s was therefore a period of defining and consolidating the state under a powerful presidential system.

1990s Croatian political life was dominated by President Franjo Tuđman, who had founded the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) in 1989 on an anti-Communist, nationalist platform and won the April–May 1990 multi-party elections. Tuđman remained in power until his death in December 1999, presiding over a period of social conservatism, clientelistic privatisation and increasingly informal governance. The domestic opposition characterised Tuđman’s rule as ever more autocratic, and one historian even argues that Croatia underwent two transitions: one away from Communism in 1990 (experienced throughout central/eastern Europe after 1989), and another from ‘democratic authoritarianism to liberal democracy’ following the first elections after Tuđman’s death (Bellamy 2002:45). In the January 2000 parliamentary elections, HDZ were replaced by a six-party centre-left coalition under Iвица Račan, who had reformed the Croatian Communist Party into the social-democratic SDP. Presidential powers were significantly reduced by Tuđman’s successor Stipe Mesić (an ex-HDZ member who left the party in 1994 in protest at Tuđman’s policy in Bosnia), elected in February 2000.

The most serious political issue during Račan's ministry was Croatia's co-operation with the ICTY, which right-wing publicists escalated into a matter for popular protest, prompting Račan's coalition partner (the liberal Dražen Budiša) to resign. The flight from justice of a high-ranked ICTY indictee, General Ante Gotovina, undermined the co-operation policy and soured Croatia's relationship with the European Union until Gotovina's arrest in December 2005. Meanwhile, the emerging HDZ leader Ivo Sanader spent his opposition years expelling hard-line nationalists and repositioning HDZ as a managerial, Christian-Democratic grouping before it won successive elections in 2003 and 2007. Under Sanader, Croatia achieved EU candidate status (after Gotovina's arrest) and NATO membership (pending), although both achievements met with widespread popular scepticism.

The post-Yugoslav wars' social and economic consequences continue to affect contemporary Croatia. The Yugoslav Army/Croatian Serb occupation of Krajina and eastern Slavonia displaced the regions' Croat civilians to other Croatian cities, which also received many refugees from the war in Bosnia (largely Croats and Bosniaks – although ethnic labels do not adequately convey the social reality of pre-war Bosnia, or anywhere else). Serb civilians were displaced in turn when the occupied regions were recaptured, and other Serbs behind Croatian lines had been harassed throughout the war. Although international institutions urged the Croatian state to facilitate the return of Croatian Serbs, the scheme did not seem particularly successful even after Račan and Mesić reversed the 1990s' obstructionist policy. Some Serb returnees faced harassment from Croat neighbours, and – perhaps more fundamentally – economically-depressed front-line regions often have little to offer ex-refugees who have since built up family lives in Belgrade or abroad. Many of the estimated 400,000 Croatian war veterans (with high rates of PTSD and unemployment) continue to claim extra privileges from the state in return for their wartime sacrifice, and Croatian cities' character has been altered by war-related and economic migration from less urbanised regions of Croatia and Herzegovina. This thesis is not a political or social history of contemporary Croatia, or even a historical account of the Croatian music industry. However, all the major developments have been reflected in popular music or debates surrounding it. By analysing the example of popular music, the thesis therefore offers wider insights into contemporary Croatia.

The term 'popular music' requires some explanation, since it does not translate particularly well into Croatian – as I discovered when I said 'popularna glazba' to contacts. The best equivalent might be 'zabavna glazba' ('[light] entertainment music'), but this tends

to connote the particular musical style of televised festivals. Indeed, the very definition of what ‘zabavna’ is (not) has been contested (ch. 3), and restricting the remit to ‘zabavna’ music might have made it difficult to incorporate the fierce cultural struggles over popularised folk music into the analysis. ‘Narodna’ (‘folk’) music does etymologically mean ‘popular’, but is too broad *and* too restrictive: it can cover anything from glossily-produced pop-folk (I often call this ‘showbusiness-folk’) to folklore ensembles’ activities,¹ but excludes ‘pop-rock’ and ‘zabavna’. English-language synonyms like ‘pop’ or ‘rock’ are not helpful either: although their meanings can be wide in English, in Croatian they (especially ‘rock’) have narrower meanings and usually stand for guitar-based music with no folk elements. It is also important to avoid imposing a UK/US concept which might not fit the specific evolution of Yugoslav pop (see Rasmussen 2002; Vuletić 2006). ‘Estrada’ (‘showbusiness’) might be a workable alternative, except that some artists and their listeners deny vehemently that they belong to it.² The most accurate definition might actually be ‘music as a form of mediated entertainment’, but ‘popular music’ is the least worst alternative to its clumsiness in both languages.

1.2 Methodology

This thesis is about musical texts in a broad sense: not only lyrics and music, but visual presentation, marketing, and the complex of deliberate and accidental narratives that produce performers’ ‘star image’ (Dyer 1998). It is therefore worth researching the conditions which affected texts’ production too. Moreover, Katherine Verdery’s ‘ethnographic approach to textual analysis’ (1991:19–20) uses fieldwork as an extra analytical method to help understand ‘the field of social relations’ in which texts circulate. Popular music is thus suited to an interdisciplinary analysis combining literary, historical, and anthropological methods: we are interested not just in what the texts might have meant but in the contexts of their emergence, and in how people have made meaning out of them.

¹ For readers more familiar with UK/US music than south-east Europe, the Anglo-American usage of ‘folk’ and ‘pop-folk’ (a lo-fi, acoustic and often socially-engaged niche genre) should not be confused with the ex-Yugoslav usage (a top-selling showbusiness product occupying approximately the same industry niche as R&B/hip-hop in the UK/US – another potential comparison is with US country-and-western). ‘Neo-folk’ in ex-Yugoslavia is not an underground, post-punk, neo-pagan milieu inspired by (the Slovenian band) Laibach and others (see Webb 2007) but an early-1990s outgrowth of Yugoslav mass-media newly-composed folk music which was heavily promoted by the Serbian regime (see Gordy 1999).

² Unlike Russia, where the term is embraced (MacFadyen 2002a).

Although some important secondary data for this thesis was produced by Croatian ethnomusicologists (1.3.2), my historical account draws largely on Croatian newspaper/magazine sources: they contained historical information but were also valuable themselves as primary sources in debates over music. I had begun to collect this data while researching my MA dissertation (a preliminary investigation of Croatian popular music and national identity), since several daily newspapers (*Večernji list*, *Vjesnik*, *Slobodna Dalmacija* from Split, *Novi list* from Rijeka) had online archives dating from c.1999. Doctoral research in Croatia allowed me to examine more publications as printed material. Besides *Večernji list*, the state tabloid during the 1990s (since privatised), I analysed the entire post-1990 runs of several magazines with a variety of audiences and political standpoints: the metropolitan news weeklies *Globus* (1990–) and *Nacional* (1995–), the ‘family magazine’ *Arena* (1990–) which mainly addressed women from small towns and the countryside (who might well have moved to larger cities), the oppositional and satirical weekly *Feral tribune* (1993–), the Split-based weekly *Nedjeljna Dalmacija* (1990–98) which the state controversially took over in 1993, and the short-lived far-right weekly *Slobodni tjednik* (1990–93). I also continued to keep up with daily newspapers online (*Jutarnji list* went online in 2005; the tabloid *24 sata* launched in 2006, when *Novi list* unfortunately became subscribers-only). Time constraints and library order limits prevented me consulting the 1990s run of *Vjesnik*, the state broadsheet. Although *Vjesnik* had served other researchers (e.g. Uzelac 1998) as a useful source for analysing state/presidential ideology, 2000s *Vjesnik* gave little space to music and never appeared to cover events I could not have found out about elsewhere, so my time was more usefully spent increasing the diversity of my sources. A further source of textual material was song lyrics, which enabled a literary approach. These were often available in album artwork or online; if not, I transcribed them myself.³ Videos were watched on Croatian television or YouTube, where readers unfamiliar with the songs should turn (Appendix).

Besides historical and literary methods, this thesis also draws on approximately nine months of fieldwork in Croatia between July 2006 and September 2007. Most of my time was spent in Zagreb, so that I could arrange interviews while doing press research in the National and University Library and accessing a wide range of cultural events; later, I visited a small eastern Slavonian town where, according to an acquaintance there, many of the topics I was interested in were everyday topics of conversation. My interviews were

³ I systematically collected 733 lyrics about national/regional identity, and probably encountered well over a thousand other songs on miscellaneous themes.

semi-structured, lasting between 60 and 90 minutes. After my respondents had introduced themselves,⁴ I began to ask about important topics from my media research; however, respondents often had knowledge or interest in a particular topic or activity, in which case I encouraged them to spend as much time as they liked talking about it too (after all, one reason for fieldwork is that the media's concerns are not necessarily the same ones that matter in everyday life).

This 'standard' plan altered in two ways. Interviews with professionals concentrated more on historical information and the role of the respondent's organisation (of course, music-making is a spectrum of subjectivities rather than a professional/amateur divide; I considered a 'professional' someone with sustained involvement in a particular organisation/activity who could provide information about it). Once in the field, I also discovered that going to concerts or watching television with potential respondents often triggered discussions of important matters I had not included in my original interview structure and called my attention to things I might have overlooked. When asking contacts to recommend possible informants, I did ask them to think of people whose background differed in some way from their own, but above-average income earners were still over-represented. One of the most seriously skewed factors was my respondents' age-structure, since a group of ethnology/sociology students became interested in participating and I could not recruit as many differently-aged informants. However, their involvement provided me with many different viewpoints on issues they felt strongly about, and so I did not turn anyone down for the sake of balancing the age-groups.

This thesis complements existing historiography on the Yugoslav wars by showing the influence of nationalist discourses on cultural production during and after the conflict. In particular, it explores the argument that the wartime states used the media to promote ethnic identification and break down trans-ethnic identities (Gagnon 2004; Žarkov 2007) by going beyond the original focus of scholarship (news reporting) into a media sector which could arguably penetrate everyday life in different ways (entertainment). Its closest methodological equivalent is probably Eric Gordy's chapter on rock and showbusiness-folk in Milošević's Serbia (1999:103–64). My focus on cultural production until the present day also illuminates existing research on the political aspects of Croatia's democratic transition (Bellamy 2002, 2003; Peskin and Boduszynski 2003; Fisher 2006; Jović 2006). However, recent anthropological research (e.g. Volčič 2005a, 2005c, 2007a; Jansen 2005a, 2005b) has also shown that everyday social and cultural life is not solely structured by the experience

⁴ All names have been changed.

of the Yugoslav wars. The effects and extent of Croatia's separation from Yugoslavia have been manifested in various, unpredictable ways, for which a national level of analysis sometimes may not account. A fourth relevant body of work is the ethnomusicology of former Yugoslavia and south-east Europe. Themes such as the transformation of folk music in the city or the meaning and legacy of the 'Balkans' transcend national boundaries and offer an opportunity to go beyond a solely national focus.

1.3 Popular music in south-east Europe

1.3.1 Popular music in ex-Yugoslavia

The historiography of ex-Yugoslav popular music, as written by Ivan Čolović (1985), Milena Dragičević-Šešić (1994), Eric Gordy (1999), Ivana Kronja (2001) and Ljerka Rasmussen (2002) – among others – begins with 1980s research into Serbian and Bosnian newly-composed folk music (NCFM). Čolović's textual approach treated NCFM as 'symbolic verbal communication' representing social change in modern and urban environments and offering a means of marking various life stages e.g. on radio request-shows (1985:143, 149). Čolović's serious treatment of NCFM influenced Milena Dragičević-Šešić (1988, 1994) to sociologically investigate its audiences. She too was interested in how village-based mass culture connected 'the folkloric (traditional) with new urban myths' (1994:123) and what happened to folk culture during urbanisation – the so-called 'countryside in the city' (Rihtman-Auguštin 1970:34 in Žanić 2007:76) phenomenon. She posited the NCFM audience to belong to the 'traditional' social model of inhabitants of villages and small towns (including those who had moved to larger cities), as the NCFM audience, and found that young people in the traditional model primarily experienced themselves as members of a generationally-differentiated community rather than as individuals with personal aspirations (Dragičević-Šešić 1994:72). Although much of her study was quantitative, a further section applied literary methods to Lepa Brena's performance persona (though rarely lyrics) as a case study of NCFM constituting 'everyday life as spectacle' (Dragičević-Šešić 1994:143).⁵ At the same time, Ines Prica's study (1991) of 1980s Belgrade youth subcultures and their symbolic practices of group definition and

⁵ Marko Stojanović (1988) also approached NCFM and its representation of social status through the figure of male soloist Miroslav Ilić; for the 1990s, Ana Vujanović (2002) analysed the construction of stardom surrounding Serbian Roma singer Džej Ramadanovski. Meanwhile, Dimitrije Vujadinović (1988) further emphasised NCFM's economic basis; RTV Novi Sad commissioned less detailed audience research (Kosničar 1989) into how viewers found out about programmes; Sveta Lukić (1989:42–55) discussed RTV Belgrade's NCFM programming strategy.

maintenance found that popular music (rock, punk, chart pop, and NCFM) was, alongside dress, their most significant resource.⁶

Eric Gordy (1999:131, 136) extended Dragičević-Šešić's work by adding rock culture to the analysis; he also relied heavily on Čolović's 1990s essays in presenting the overtly politically-engaged variant of neo-folk (1999:128–31). His identification of folk as a sociological 'construction' persuasively suggests that folk should not be treated 'as a descriptive aesthetic category' but as a derivation from other social categorisations, particularly urban-vs.-rural ones (1999:136). Under the culturally and materially restrictive conditions created by sanctions, hyperinflation and the official Serbian media embracing NCFM, individuals who identified with rock adopted it as a 'counteridentity' and used folk as an important boundary-defining resource (1999:144), while the regime used folk as part of its campaign of 'destruction of alternatives' – alongside co-opting opposition politicians, harassing independent media, and even destroying 'sociability' by exacerbating hyperinflation.⁷ This analysis implicitly acknowledges how popular music helps constitute the cultural space of everyday life. However, its strong sympathy with underground Belgrade rock culture views folk through a mass-culture critique. Gordy (2005:4) has since recognised that his earlier work might have presented Serbian society as too 'dichotomous' – the groups symbolised by the rock/folk divide – rather than depicting 'temporary and opportunistic coalitions', and suggested that the apparent urban/rural disconnection may in fact have been a symptom of independent media being much more available in cities as opposed to villages.⁸

Ivana Kronja (2001) emphasises the aesthetic features of Serbian 'turbofolk', particularly its values of style and conspicuous consumption and its promotion of stereotypically-gendered roles for male and female personalities.⁹ Kronja's understanding of style develops Prica, and her history of turbofolk's origins follows Čolović and Dragičević-Šešić.¹⁰ Her feminist perspective is echoed by Julie Mostov (2000:101), who argues that turbofolk's 'eroticizing of social relations' undermined republican-democratic values of

⁶ On youth in contemporary Croatia, see Perasović 2001, 2006; Kalapoš 2002; Lalić 2003.

⁷ Steinberg (2004:15–22) on rock music in Serbian anti-Milošević student protests derives his background from Gordy and Rasmussen.

⁸ See Volčič 2005a for a more recent anthropological examination of Belgrade 'urban' identity among young intellectuals; Todorović and Bakir 2005 for a spatial approach to Belgrade rock culture; Jansen 2005a/2005b and Spasić 2006 for informants' understanding of 'urbanity'.

⁹ Malešević (2003:191) too connects turbofolk to the rise of the criminal/profiteer class whose values it affirmed; cf. Bulgaria (Ivanova 1997).

¹⁰ Rade Stanić (2001) offers a shorter historical account of three 'generations' of NCFM/turbofolk based on characteristic female soloists; Saša Radojević (2001) traces some thematic continuities between 1960s NCFM and turbofolk.

‘reciprocity and individual agency’, and Jessica Greenberg (2006a:142–3), who relates post-Milošević turbofolk to competing models of masculinity. Yet Kronja and Gordy both imply a model where the conservative meanings transmitted through turbofolk and its aesthetic are necessarily accepted by their audiences (e.g. Kronja 2002:14–15). Miša Đurković (2002:179) also challenges the ‘political’ history of turbofolk with an alternative structural explanation where turbofolk actually flourished because socialist-era levels of control over the media had collapsed, rather than it being imposed by the regime. Whichever argument is more accurate for Serbia, studying how Croatian political and cultural elites might have instrumentalised popular music while defining their own state’s cultural identity may help our understanding of post-Yugoslav elites in general and the similarities/differences in their state-building processes.

Most research into turbofolk attends to one national cultural area (Serbia) rather than considering contemporary cultural relationships between ex-Yugoslav states.¹¹ An exception is Goran Tarlać’s (2001) discussion of wartime NCFM in Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia, although this still treats them as separate cultural areas. Ivan Čolović’s study of ‘ethno’ and ‘world’ music in Serbia (2004a) extends comparison to most of the globe, but does not discuss the Croatian ethno scene. The ethnomusicologist Ljerka Rasmussen (2002) has taken a broader historical approach to Yugoslav NCFM, tracing it from the 1950s introduction of orchestral arrangements into folk to the 1970s/1980s use of electric instrumentation and incipient fusion with light-entertainment zabavna music.¹² She does not classify NCFM as uniformly negative, but argues that it sometimes had a ‘culturally empowering role’ since it ‘embodied the inherently pluralistic makeup of Yugoslav culture’ (2002:xxv). She methodologically expands previous work by presenting the attitudes of musical producers (2002:xxix–xxx) alongside considering cultural policy (à la Gordy) and the music’s reception (à la Dragičević-Šešić). She has more recently begun to consider post-Yugoslav Bosnian/Serbian cultural relations as expressed through music (Rasmussen 2007).

Rasmussen’s discussion of 1960s Yugoslav music festivals (2002:60) could expand upon *how* the festival genre promoted a sense of Yugoslav imagined community, the way that Catherine Wanner (1998:121–40) suggests post-Soviet Ukrainian music festivals symbolically incorporated the Russified east into the Ukrainian whole. It is also

¹¹ On Serbia, see also van de Port 1998, 1999a, 1999b on Roma music and bars; Hudson 2003:172–6 briefly relating two pop performers to the Kosovo and Drina myths; Mikić 2006 on imagery of medieval and Yugoslav nationhood in various pop projects.

¹² Kos 1972 and Petrović 1974 discussed the earlier stages.

problematic that Rasmussen excludes Croatian neo-traditional music from 'NCFM' because it was too region-specific and unconnected to the broader NCFM scene (2002:99). A discussion of Croatian music's relationship with NCFM in the Yugoslav era would be extremely helpful in approaching the controversy over whether Croatian popular music has converged with NCFM since 1991.¹³ Moreover, Rasmussen herself has questioned whether NCFM can be circumscribed 'as an exclusively southeastern cultural phenomenon' (1995:252). Ruža Bonifačić has also described a 'relation of *tamburica* music with modern urban context' (1998:136),¹⁴ like Dragičević-Šešić's NCFM, and Rajko Muršić (1996) has pointed to the replacement of folk bands with pop bands at village entertainments, manifesting a different style of music but a continued social function. The 'newly-composed' pattern thus seems to extend beyond the particularly Serbian/Bosnian version.

Nonetheless, Rasmussen's contextualisation of NCFM within a wider dynamic of socially-constructed boundary definitions such as 'perceptions of culture-core differences between Balkan and (western) European culture' (2002:xix) is valuable. She has also provided a case-study of 'the ideologically indexed aesthetic judgment of oriental music' directed against explicitly Turkish-influenced bands such as Južni vetar in the increasingly politicised late 1980s (Rasmussen 1996:112; see also Prica 1988). Another discussion of turbofolk, by Tomislav Longinović (2000), applies a post-colonial perspective to its visual imagery and 'longing for European economic "whiteness"' before attributing it to 'a hybrid culture [...] of musical importations from the past and present colonial masters' (2000:640–1), but offers few substantive conclusions.

Stef Jansen's anthropology of the discursive practices which were used to resist the primacy of national identity in 1990s Serbia and Croatia – which he terms 'anti-nationalism' (2005a:88) – often touches on popular music. In the worldviews of Jansen's informants, showbusiness-folk music was again a symbol of rural/village culture, and the singer-songwriter Đorđe Balašević symbolised the common Yugoslav past which nationalists preferred the public not to remember. It is worth asking whether those symbolic mechanisms have remained intact during the political changes in both countries. Forthcoming doctoral work by Marina Simić (2006) explores the latest incarnation of Serbian urban/rural musical symbolism by comparing the Exit festival, an international rock event, with Guča, a brass-band competition frequently associated with traditional folk

¹³ Rasmussen defines NCFM as the Serbian (Šumadijan) and Bosnian streams which made up Yugoslavia's dominant NCFM genre. However, as a *technique*, the term 'newly-composed folk music' also implies new composition in other folk musics, e.g. the extensive Croatian *tamburica* scene.

¹⁴ *Tamburica*: a stringed Slavonian folk instrument.

culture. Ivan Čolović (2006) shows that ‘ethno’ music in a Serbian context is discursively constructed through an analogy with ‘world’ music to be a high-valued, cosmopolitan alternative to supposedly inauthentic, cheapened pop-folk.

The most informative study on Bosnia-Herzegovina, by Mirjana Laušević (2000), discusses Bosniak, Croat and Serb cultural/musical policy during the 1992–95 war as a means of creating separate cultural spaces.¹⁵ Laušević recognises the constructed nature of national musical ‘traditions’ and the way that – implicitly reflecting theories of symbolism such as David Kertzer’s (1988) – music becomes a ‘national symbol’ because people assign meanings to it and share them (Laušević 2000:294–5): if only this had been a monograph not a chapter. Scholarly debate on Slovenia concerns the popularity of Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav music, cinema, sport and material culture. These are sometimes viewed as imitations of the ‘Balkan Other’, sometimes as cultural hybridisation (Baskar 2003:203). Mitja Velikonja (2002), taking the latter view, demonstrates one way in which Croatian music becomes a meaning-making resource *outside* Croatia, and shows how the consumption of popular music can accompany the elaboration of an individual’s meaningful biography.¹⁶ Popular music in federal Yugoslavia is discussed by various histories and interview collections (e.g. Trifunović 1986; Luković 1989), which are now more valuable as primary material; the 1950s and 1960s are the subject of ongoing research by Dean Vuletić (2006; 2007), and Martin Pogačar (2006) has written on 1980s new-wave rock.

It is worth asking whether the conclusions of 1980s authors such as Prica are still applicable after the intervening political, social, and technological changes in ex-Yugoslav cultural space. The nature of those changes has of course affected the directions of research, and authors on the 1990s were chiefly concerned with the politicisation and ethnicisation of music.¹⁷ The importance of music to individuals, families and groups – a common topic in the 1980s – has been downplayed, and the ideological effectiveness of politicised music is frequently assumed. Moreover, politically-based accounts have tended to situate themselves in one national cultural space only, even though consumption of

¹⁵ Elsewhere, Laušević (1996:123) has devoted more attention to the recontextualisation of *ilahiya* songs as a marker of Bosnian Muslim identity and support for the Bosniak party SDA.

¹⁶ Velikonja (2005) has more recently undertaken a theoretical study of post-socialist nostalgia with Slovenian ‘Balkan culture’ as one empirical case-study. See also Mikula 2003, Lindstrom 2006 and Volčič 2007a, 2007b on ‘virtual’ and popular-cultural expressions of nostalgia for socialism.

¹⁷ Although, note Marija Grujić’s work-in-progress (2006) on turbofolk in Serbia, treating it as a conceptual category and paying critical attention to audiences’ own relationships with the stylistic, aesthetic and ideological contexts of music described as ‘turbofolk’. This conceptual approach to musical categories is gaining ground in other studies of south-east European music, e.g. on Greek rebetiko (Koglin 2008).

music across new state borders became ever easier after the falls of Tuđman and Milošević and with the growth of transnational media (satellite television and the Internet).¹⁸ It is ever more appropriate to ask whether previously-identified tensions are manifested, altered or intensified when the same products/texts are recontextualised through temporal or spatial transfer into contemporary Croatian cultural spaces.

1.3.2 Popular music in Croatia

Croatian anthropologists have often investigated aspects of popular music in their wider concern with the ethnology of everyday life, from describing war-related popular culture (Prica 1993; Senjković 1993; Olujić 1995:195–6) to an in-depth study (Kalapoš 2002) relating Istrian-dialect pop and rock music to regional identity. Naila Ceribašić (1993) showed how the music played by wedding bands changed during Croatia's independence process and the war, with Yugoslav folk music declining and Slavonian tamburica taking its place. Meanwhile, an ethnography of Croatian immigrants to Australia described how communal watching of music videos let immigrant families maintain a sense of connection to the imagined Croatian community (Kolar-Panov 1997:140–1),¹⁹ and Dražen Lalić (2003) touches on certain musical events in analysing the urban identity of Split, although his own concerns are primarily sport and municipal authorities. Ines Prica (2004) discusses the Croatian singer Severina, whose music verges into folk, as an instance of the symbolism of transition, reminiscent of similar Serbian discussions of folk.

Most of the Croatian studies deal with music during the war. Svanibor Pettan (1998) divided wartime showbusiness into an 'official' repertoire concerned with Croatia's international image and an 'alternative' one expressing overt aggression, Maša Bogojeva-Magzan (2005) has researched changes to school music curricula during the war,²⁰ Tvrtko Zebec (1995) discussed the war's effect on folk dance (as has Anthony Shay (2002)), and Tatjana Pavlović (1999), Naila Ceribašić (1995; 2000), and Carol Lilly and Jill Irvine (2002) have all discussed gender constructions in wartime popular music. Unfortunately, there is a tendency to introduce many one-line lyrical examples to make a general point (Ceribašić 2000:230–31; Pavlović 1999), instead of a broader thematic analysis of wartime showbusiness. Meanwhile, the structural background to wartime musical production –

¹⁸ On transnationalism, see Hannerz 1996; Ang 1996; Appadurai 1996; Vertovec 1999; Portes et al. 1999; Faist 2000; Vertovec 2001; Morley 2001; Berezin 2003; Jackson et al eds. 2004. On the Internet and music, see Leyshon et al. 2005.

¹⁹ Other diaspora studies include: Kaldor-Robinson 2002; Djuric 2003; Horak 2003; Fischer 2005; Čapo Žmegac 2005; Winland 2006.

²⁰ The discussion of the war just reproduces Pettan (1998)'s typology (Bogojeva-Magzan 2005:100–6).

Croatian state television's discursive policies for representing the war – is discussed by Mark Thompson (1994:149–75).²¹ Ivo Žanić (2007:15) has acknowledged Thompson's study as valuable but pointed out that it does not engage with the 'social framework and conditions' in which media messages are produced and received. Sharon Fisher's chapter on Croatian/Slovakian cultural politics (2006:42, 107–8) briefly mentions the absence of Serbian music on the 1990s Croatian market and HDZ's affection for tamburica.

Anthropologists are also interested in regionally-rooted musical forms. Joško Čaleta has described the historical, geographical and social dimensions of 'the Mediterranean' in Dalmatian popular and *klapa* music (1999:188),²² and Ruža Bonifačić (1998) has charted Slavonian tamburica playing from spontaneously-gathered ensembles to professionalisation, culminating in a wave of new tamburica production. Jana Bosanac (2004) has discussed hip-hop and its own practices of representing region through local dialect. Croatian anthropological concepts of differentiated regions (Pannonian, Adriatic and Balkan/Dinaric), the foundation for many value-judgements about music, are analysed by Pettan (1996). Sanja Kalapoš's ethnological account of Istrian popular music, however, is probably the most successful application of theories of identity and everyday life to Croatian entertainment.

Kalapoš takes an explicitly Barthian position (2002:83–4) in viewing identity, including ethnicity, as a multi-layered, situational concept, based on how her respondents reconciled their Istrian/Croatian/urban identities and contrasted their Croatian identity against the strong nationalism they perceive in certain other parts of Croatia – a common discursive practice in Istria (Ashbrook 2005:459). She uses qualitative, open-ended interviews with young people, plus information from print media and musician interviews comprising a historical account of 1990s Istrian-dialect music.²³ However, she avoids musical and lyrical aspects (2002:10); another limitation (albeit a consequence of the project's scope) is that her conclusions are almost completely confined to Istria. The popularity of Istrian music beyond Istria is not discussed in depth, although she recognises that the state media's promotion of Istrian music in 1994–95 may have represented an 'exceptionally symbolic' attempt to 'culturally incorporate' Istria into the state (2002:98). Benjamin Perasović (2001), a sociologist, also based his research into Croatian youth subcultures on interviews and an engagement with western cultural theory. The results enabled him to historicise the

²¹ See also Malešević and Uzelac 1997; Uzelac 1998, 2006; Skopljanac Brunner et al. ed. 2000; Milivojević 2000; Erjavec and Volčič 2007.

²² For a more critical approach to the 'Mediterranean' in Croatian discourse, see Rihtman-Augustin 1999.

²³ On informants' relation of one Istrian musician (Franci Blašković) to regional identity, see Orlić 2004.

evolution of youth subcultures since the late 1970s and ask whether Anglo-American concepts could simply be transferred ‘from Brixton to Zapruđe [a Zagreb suburb]’ (Perasović 2001:12), although he deals entirely with reception rather than production.

A literary approach to music is exemplified in Reana Senjković and Davor Dukić’s (2005) study of nationalist Croatian popular music. Their thematic analysis identifies main themes of ‘the Homeland’, ‘the warrior’, ‘the enemy’, and ‘male hedonism’ (2005:47–50).²⁴ These are mainly described with an aggregation of one-line quotes, often (as with Ceribašić and Pavlović) unattributed to a song or performer. Songs by Mile Krajina and Thompson merit separate sections thanks to the singers’ popularity (Senjković and Dukić 2005:51), but neither receives much more than a page. Finally, wartime showbusiness is connected to state media efforts to shape ‘cultural memory’ around historical references and folkloric values and reassure Croats of their ‘collective identity’ (2005:57). Again, scope is the study’s greatest limitation, since it was restricted to one (extremist) website and has to exclude music (e.g. female-voiced light-entertainment songs) which was not represented there. A literary approach to a wider selection of texts and a historical analysis of their production might help to show connections between nationalist showbusiness and political ideology. Further research is also necessary on reception of these texts in everyday life and public discourse. For instance, although the study took place in April 2004 (2005:58), there is no reference to the scandal surrounding the appearance of Ustaša songs performed by Thompson a few months previously. Moreover, the authors mention that ‘domestic music critics often characterise Thompson’s opus as turbo folk’ (2005:51) but do not further analyse the symbolism of such a classification.

Existing work on popular music in Croatia has introduced three major themes: music’s relationship with ideology and the state, the mediation of individual, regional and national identity, and the meanings made from music by individuals when negotiating these levels of identification. However, Croatian popular music still lacks a historical account like Ivana Kronja’s, an analysis of its position in state-building cultural policy like Eric Gordy’s, or an anthropological treatment of music in everyday life like Sanja Kalapoš’s for Istria. This thesis sits at the intersection of the above historical, literary and anthropological approaches, and treats Croatia not as an isolated cultural unit but as a recipient and source of phenomena and tensions affecting the entire ex-Yugoslav region, south-east Europe, and Europe as a whole.

²⁴ See my identification of ‘history, victimhood, folklore, and brotherhood’ as major lyrical themes of one such singer (Baker 2005:20)).

1.3.3 Political symbolism and national identity in ex-Yugoslavia

One of these transnational conceptual frameworks is the east/west opposition motif – often termed ‘Balkanism’ by association with Edward Said’s ‘Orientalism’. Following Milena Bakić-Hayden and Robert Hayden (Bakić-Hayden and Hayden 1992; Bakić-Hayden 1995) and Maria Todorova (1994, 1997), a growing number of authors have explored the use of eastern and Balkan imagery as symbols of exclusion. Such ‘symbolic geographies’ (Bakić-Hayden and Hayden 1992) occur in cultural value-judgements, in constructing national identity itself and as symbolic resources for political mobilisation: e.g., Maple Razsa and Nicole Lindstrom (2004) found a pervasive European vs. Balkan discourse not only in Franjo Tuđman’s ideology but also among some liberal opposition politicians and radical activists. Although there are controversies between Bakić-Hayden and Todorova over how precisely to relate the phenomenon to Said’s original argument, and Bakić-Hayden’s framework in particular only accounts for divisions between nations rather than within a single national group (Ashbrook 2006:632), the symbolism itself is still valuable to identify. To understand the cultural artefacts of everyday life one needs to bear in mind the symbolic content and politicisation of their cultural space – and, according to recent research on the region, the same goes for national identity.

Alex Bellamy’s work on the construction of Croatian identity (explored through case studies of language, education, the economy, the Church, Istria, and football) bases itself on Michael Billig’s concept of national identity as continually reproduced in the everyday sphere (Bellamy 2003:21–2), and on generic research questions proposed by Katherine Verdery. These counteract reification of the nation by asking how people become national, how the nation is symbolised, and how it intersects with other ‘social operators’ (Bellamy 2003:27). Bellamy (2003:1) extends these into a three-level model of national identity: “‘big stories’” distinguishing the nation from others, ‘political and intellectual elites’ who utilise them, and ‘individual subjectivity’ i.e. how ‘the narratives of national identity articulated by political and intellectual elites are manifested and constantly reinterpreted in social practice’.²⁵ He also shares Verdery’s focus on contestation as the motor of ideology (see Verdery 1991). The levels of identity are ‘mutually constitutive’ (2003:1), and interact in a manner which recalls Rogers Brubaker’s notion (Brubaker 1996:8) of intersecting fields of nationalism. Keith Brown (2003:21) likewise considers that the Macedonian nation has been re-made through ‘extended interaction between individuals, institutions, ideologies

²⁵ Likewise Campana (2006:144) on Chechnya.

and ideas' as a continual and contested process – again, the nation as expressed through social practice.

The most informative analysis of Croatian nationalist political culture is by Reana Senjković, who has investigated the visual imagery of 1990s 'political propaganda and folkloric artistic expression' (2002:53). Her material includes posters, party-political broadcasts, badges, military insignia, and individual musical products, with most attention paid to images of leadership in HDZ ideology (Senjković 2002:77–136), and the gender implications of Croatian nationalism. Popular music is seen from time to time to be a source of identity narratives, but (given the focus on visual representations) Senjković is most interested in music video (2002:49–50), and usually aggregates lyrical references into many examples of a certain theme (2002:256).

On gender, Senjković (2002:137, 165) has been strongly influenced by Enloe (1983, 2000), Elshtain (1995), and (on representations of war) Jeffords (1989). Several other authors approach gendered nationalist discourses in former Yugoslavia: e.g., Wendy Bracewell points to the 'central, dominant role for men and masculinity in the discursive construction of nations' which is implied by the recurrent image of 'woman as the defining "other"' (2000:566), and Carol Lilly and Jill Irvine have investigated the participation of real women in Serbian and Croatian nationalist policies, including one page on female singers performing in symbolic support of the Croatian Army (2002:119–20). Julie Mostov has called attention to the discursive gendering of space, including a brief reference to the management of sexuality in the presentation of female singers (2000:100), and Dubravka Žarkov (2007) shows how the media linked gender and nation in their project to make ethnicity the most salient level of identity during and after the break-up of Yugoslavia (see Gagnon 2004). Michaela Schäuble (2006; in press) has researched constructions of masculinity and nationalism in central Dalmatia, and Aleksandra Milićević (2006) has done the same for Serbia.²⁶ All these studies follow Nira Yuval-Davis's attempt to rectify 'hegemonic theories' of nationalism by stressing the importance of gender in nationalism's 'genealogical', 'cultural' and 'civic' dimensions (Yuval-Davis 1997:1, 21).

Dunja Rihtman-Auguštin, an ex-colleague of Senjković's, was also interested in 'the influence of power relations on the everyday space in which we move and live' (Rihtman-Auguštin 2000:7). Her anthropology mainly dealt with the politicisation of spatial and temporal understandings of the everyday world (e.g. street names and state holidays) during the fall of Yugoslavia and rise of Tuđman (see also Esbenshade 1995). She followed

²⁶ See also Greenberg 2006a, 2006b; Helms 2006.

Kertzer in understanding political power as invisible and recognised ‘only with the aid of rituals and symbols’ (Rihtman-Auguštin 2000:10), thus projecting an understanding of nationalism beyond state ideology into the ‘non-formalised nationalism’ of everyday reminders of nationhood (2000:28). Engagement with the everyday is also found in the literary essays of Slavenka Drakulić (1996) and Dubravka Ugrešić (1994; 1998). Both authors frequently refer to nationalism’s intrusion into spatial and temporal lifeworlds, viewing it as a strategy of ‘confiscation of memory’ (Ugrešić 1998:217) and symbolic realignment (see also Zakošek 2000).

Rihtman-Auguštin’s interest in political symbolism, and Senjković’s in folklore, necessarily recalls the work of Ivo Žanić (Senjković 2002:133) and Ivan Čolović.²⁷ Žanić argues that the media function like myth in defining ‘moral, aesthetic and cognitive structures’ and thus provide ‘the imaginative foundation of the community’ through metaphor (Žanić 2007:14). ‘[M]etaphors for popular consumption’ (Žanić 2007:14) recall the theoretical basis of Rob Shields’s (1991) concept of spatialisation, and indeed much of Žanić’s work analyses what Shields would call the ‘place-myths’ of mountainous regions which are historically/folklorically associated with banditry. Žanić (2007:143) identifies a dominant Croatian discourse on banditry (citizens/knights standing in defence against hajduks/bandits who hated and threatened the city) and a dominant Serbian discourse (more positive towards the bandit). Yet the symbolic resource of banditry could also penetrate Croatian ideology, as when the image of ‘the Croatian banner waving over Romanija’ was used to justify a territorial claim over Bosnia (Žanić 2007:237–9).²⁸

The best-known study of political symbolism in ex-Yugoslavia is probably Ivan Čolović’s (1994, 2002) on the emergence of folkloric communication styles and their use for legitimising political/military projects or elevating ethnic identity into a community’s primary identification. Folk -music lyrics are among his sources, since for Čolović political power is ultimately located in the field of the symbolic (Čolović 2002:1) (recalling Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of symbolic power (Bourdieu 1991:75)) and can be activated by invoking myth. Other authors have attempted to connect ex-Yugoslav mythology to contemporary politics, but often unreflexively – e.g. Branimir Anzulović (1999:45–8) attributing Serbian violence to a persistent Dinaric ‘pagan-tribal culture’ glorifying lawlessness (see Carmichael

²⁷ See also individual case-studies of historical myths and political symbolism in ex-Yugoslavia, e.g.: Hayden 1992; Paternost 1992; Roksandić 1995; Žanić 1995; Bellamy 1999; Bellamy 2000; Đurić 2000; Jansen 2000; Marković 2000; Zirojević 2000; Žanić 2002; Brkljačić 2003; Velikonja 2003; Žanić 2003; Pavlaković 2004; Rihtman-Auguštin 2004; Lavrence 2005; Skrbis 2005; Kolstø 2006; Šuber 2006.

²⁸ The 1998 version of his book left some unanswered questions about the social memory of Croats in Herzegovina and its divergence from Croatian state discourse; his expanded English edition fills this in (e.g. Žanić 2007:187).

2002:26–7). A more successful attempt is Wolfgang Hoepken's, where the invocation of war memory in schools is seen as a political legitimisation strategy within Čolović's strategic 'war folklore' (Hoepken 1999:212).²⁹ Bette Denich (1994) has also discussed the use of 'symbolic processes' to mediate between nationalist leaders and the public in justifying violence, with reference to the memorialisation of Second World War grave sites and the emergence since 1987 of myth-based mass ethnopolitics.

Čolović's own references to Croatia are occasional (e.g. Čolović 1994:35), but his extensive study of the symbolic aspect of politics is relevant throughout the region. His ideas about the use of myth and history to legitimise violence are also developed by Zala Volčič (2006), Christina Morus (2007) and Jelena Obradović (2008) in recent research on Serbia. The latest area of research on political myths in ex-Yugoslavia is now the commemoration of army officers and legitimisation of violence, for which popular music is one vehicle. Čolović has written on this theme himself (2004); Michaela Schäuble on the cults of the Croatian generals Ante Gotovina and Mirko Norac (in press); Jelena Obradović (2007) on Serbian discourses about Ratko Mladić; Anna di Lellio and Stephanie Schwander-Sievers (2006) on the Kosovo Albanian commander Adem Jashari. This probably comes as a response to the political significance of protests against the Hague Tribunal (see Peskin and Boduszynski 2003; Bellamy and Edmunds 2005).

1.4 Popular culture

1.4.1 International and global popular music

Theoretical models of identity often allude to music as one potential resource for individual or collective identity-construction (Jenkins 1996:50, Edensor 2002:7); popular music studies (including work by Simon Frith, Robert Walser, Richard Peterson, Andy Bennett and Sarah Thornton) give practical examples of how this happens. Frith, for instance, extends Bourdieu's concept of 'distinction' beyond a rigid class basis (Bourdieu 1984:176) into a symbolic-boundary-based theory of identity-formation which refers specifically to popular music, suggesting value-judgements are important techniques in the symbolic construction of community (Frith 1996:22). Frith's privileging of music *above* other sources of identification because of 'its direct emotional intensity' (1987:139) is not supported

²⁹ Wingfield (2003:667) notes a similar 'convergence of pedagogy, propaganda and entertainment' in 1918–45 Czechoslovakia.

(Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998:170–1),³⁰ but his expansion of ‘distinction’ remains valuable.

Robert Walser, unlike Frith, conducted ethnographic research and believes the study of popular music should take into account factors like ‘composition, performance, listening, [and] dancing’ as well as recording (Walser 1993:xiii). From a post-structuralist viewpoint, he argues one should contextualise any musical text in ‘an ideological field of conflicting interests, institutions, and memories’ (1993:29). Walser understands music as a site of social practice where meanings are constructed through a variety of codes such as lyrics, costume, staging, or vocal timbre, but also acknowledges that audiences are *unpredictable* in making sense of texts. Andy Bennett also approaches cultural products as ‘symbolic markers’ in individuals’ ‘lifestyle sites and strategies’. They are ‘instantly recognisable as global commodities’ but also take on ‘precise meanings’ bound up with local scenarios and circumstances (Bennett 2000:27). Bennett links music specifically to everyday *physical* territory, i.e. the local environment understood as a given urban space (2000:64, 197).³¹ An alternative view of space appears in the work of Richard Peterson (1997) on US country music, which he argues has functioned to create a collective identity of an abstract South and West through the ‘fabricated authenticity’ of performance conventions. However, popular music studies still tends to emphasise concrete place instead.

Sarah Thornton, like Bennett, concentrates on ‘scenes’. Rather than emphasising locality, she sees scenes as ‘taste cultures’ which defined membership and status on the basis of ‘subcultural capital’, another concept ultimately derived from Bourdieu’s ‘distinction’ (Thornton 1995:11). She shows how self-identified members of club subculture reinforced similarities between themselves, and expressed difference from non-members, by disparaging an imagined ‘mainstream’ and privileging their own fashion system as the ‘underground’ (1995:111–5). Although Ien Ang warns that ‘distinction’-based concepts can produce a simple but reified opposition between two class/cultural groups instead of a more nuanced understanding of audiences (Ang 1996:116), the basic idea of value judgements based on ‘symbolic exclusion’ to convey the boundaries of a group remains powerful (Bryson 1994:885).³² It thus proved a useful concept for Jansen

³⁰ It seems to depend on the absorption of rhythm into the body (Frith 1996:273) – although misses a potential link to Connerton’s (1989) theory of embodied memory.

³¹ Todorović and Bakir (2005) ground their study of rock music in Belgrade in space and territory. Thomas Solomon (2005a:546) applies Bennett’s emphasis on local music scenes to his own studies of local-global relationships in Turkish rap, and Alex Seago (2004:90, 99) argues that ‘the currently emerging global pop aesthetic’ is based on multiple, deterritorialised such scenes, including Belgrade’s.

³² See also Binder (1993) on frames through which the media end up selectively representing different forms of music.

(2005a:159) in his analysis of urban-rural stereotypes as a struggle for cultural capital. In using the concept of cultural capital, one should be mindful of Katherine Verdery's warning (1991:5) that Bourdieu's ideas cannot be unproblematically transferred to socialist systems because 'capital' and 'markets' themselves worked differently there. However, this reservation might not apply in the same degree to post-socialist Yugoslavia, where a capitalist market has been introduced and where even the socialist system contained more of a market element than Verdery's Romania.

Perspectives connecting music and identity narratives have frequently proved fruitful for analyses of music elsewhere in south-east Europe: e.g. Turkish pop (Stokes 1992, 2007; Solomon 2007), Bulgarian *chalga*/pop-folk (Buchanan 1996; Rice 1996; Ivanova 2001; Levy 2002; Rice 2002; Ibroscheva 2006; Buchanan 2007a; Kurkela 2007; Nielsen 2008), Hungarian *lakodalmás* (Lange 1996), Romanian *manele* (Voiculescu 2005; Beissinger 2007), Greek bouzouki (Tragaki 2005) and *skiladhiko* (Koglin 2008), Albanian *muzika popullore* (Sugarman 2007) and Roma music (Silverman 1996, 2007, 2008; Beissinger 2001; Marian-Bălașa 2004; Hofman and Tarabić 2006). A collection edited by Donna Buchanan (2007) has interrogated the concept of a common musical 'ecumene' in the Balkans as a result of Ottoman administration (which affected parts of Croatia in different ways). A common concept in these studies is the discourse of 'the country occupying the city', which should be problematised in case it overlooks the 'global processes of capital flow, urbanization, and the formation of new identities' involved in the rural-to-urban migration which precipitates such discourses (Solomon 2005a:50; see Bougarel 1999:165). Although an effective myth at emic level, one ought not to use it uncritically.

Roy Shuker (2001:x) has indicated popular music studies should account for production contexts (state policymakers, producers, promoters, broadcasters, consumers) as well as texts, like John B Thompson's call for analysis of how the media's 'technical and institutional apparatuses' mediate the transmission of symbolic and ideological forms (Thompson 1990:3–4). Keith Negus (2002) similarly calls for a critical approach to the work of 'cultural intermediaries' employed in symbolic production. This suggests a structural approach such as Edward Larkey applies to Austrian popular music. Larkey's theoretical basis is Anthony Cohen's symbolic construction of community (Cohen 1985); he finds that musical influences from elsewhere undergo 'decontextualisation' and 'recontextualisation' when new taste-groups apply meanings drawn from their own experiences (Larkey 1993:17). His historical account is mainly based on interviews (with

broadcasters, music executives, and musicians) and media sources, but does not extend to the texts' reception.³³

Some studies from other regions deal specifically with overtly political or nationalist popular music, a recurrent phenomenon in Croatia. Mechthild von Schoenebeck's study of German *Heimatschlager* (light-entertainment music with homeland imagery) songs on television concluded they matched up with right-wing programmes and ideas, and termed their 'ready-made, hackneyed, commercialised' version of tradition 'fakelore' (1998:289). Her approach to audiences, however, assumes that *Heimatschlager* is only consumed as a form of escapism (1998:281), though accepts this could do with further research (1998:290). Ulrich Adelt (2005:280) also sees television as a significant site for musical expressions of German identity, where 'irony and nostalgia' predominate since more overt expressions remain taboo. Oren Meyers and Eyal Zandberg (2002) discuss the institutionalisation of historical memory through state broadcasting of popular music in Israel.

1.4.2 Culture, the media, and audiences

Audiences are potential community members. Two main paradigms for researching audiences exist: neo-Marxist ('mass culture') theory which treats the audience as manipulated by a profit-driven 'culture industry' producing standardised products for the widest market, and the 'active audience' standpoint emphasising audience members' subversive potential to produce their own readings instead. The neo-Marxist view was classically articulated by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (1972), but later authors such as Philip Schlesinger have reproduced their concern with dominant ideology, now viewing media products as reproducing Gramscian hegemony. Schlesinger (1991:173–4) approaches national 'cultural space' as constantly contested – within the limits of the 'social space'. Dominant-ideology-led approaches may have something to offer textual analyses, and can suggest useful 'toolkits' for examining the politicised use of symbols and myths – as long as they are contextualised by also examining how audiences *react* to texts.

John Fiske epitomises the 'active audience' approach. Fiske (2001:14) argues that for every program (the commodity which is produced, sold, and transmitted) there will be many texts, because the text derives from interaction with the idiosyncratic experiences of the audience. Cultural products therefore exist in permanent tension between the authors/producers' preferred meanings and the readings audiences actually generate

³³ Survilla (2002) attempts the same for Belarus, with less theoretical engagement.

(2001:15; see also Hall 1990). John Hartley, another active-audience theorist, is less useful because he downplays the significance of ideology in the media: despite a Barthesian analysis of newspaper and television journalism in 1992, he later argued that the concept of ideology should be replaced by the value-neutral ‘cross-demographic communication’ (Hartley 1999:207). Moreover, the supposedly novel convergence of government, (higher) education, and the media (Hartley 1999:6) is by no means so novel in many non- or semi-democratic political systems, where this convergence may contribute to aggressive ‘nationalising nationalism’ (Brubaker 1996:63).

The active-audience approach extends to fandom and subcultures. 1990s fandom studies often concentrated on fans’ textual *production* (Hills 2002:65), but more recent work (e.g. Hills 2002; Sandvoss 2003, 2005; Crawford 2004) instead emphasises how fans constitute themselves as a group or community. This has many features in common with studies of subculture. Dick Hebdige’s (1979) classic concept of subculture as resistance to a dominant ideology through style has often been used by ex-Yugoslav anthropologists (e.g. Prica 1991:12; Kronja 2001:75; Perasović 2006:5), but later cultural studies have questioned its usefulness for several reasons. If a resistance-to-ideology frame is too restrictive to account for audience practices, it is hard to justify it for subcultures either. Hebdige’s paradigm has been criticised for assuming that subcultures’ styles are those of their men (McRobbie 2000:34), for not drawing on ethnographic research (Webb 2007:22–3), and more generally for not acknowledging the role of various media and businesses in authenticating subcultures (Thornton 1995:9). Indeed, Stanley Cohen’s theory of ‘moral panics’ (2002) assumes that subcultures only exist when the media label them as such. Nevertheless, if groups can regard themselves as subcultures it remains an available level of identification.

Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998:15) locate the neo-Marxist *and* active-audience approaches within a wider discourse concerned with dominant ideologies which they term ‘the Incorporation/Resistance paradigm’. They disagree with it because a fully active audience might not necessarily try to *resist* dominant ideological messages (1998:31).³⁴ Instead, they offer an alternative ‘Spectacle/Performance paradigm’ of the contemporary media’s presence in everyday life where audience membership becomes conflated with participation (1998:36–7). This argument lacks historical clarification, or a consideration of power relations and hegemony (Crawford 2004:26–7). However, their emphasis on

³⁴ Moreover, the media may also have different interests from political- or class-based power blocs (Sandvoss 2005:18).

everyday performance of identities recalls performativity-based concepts of identity advanced by Jenkins (1996), Edensor (2002), and Judith Butler (1991). Indeed, their 'narcissism' derives from Anthony Giddens' self-reflexivity (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998:94-5). Their attitude to performance may contribute to a theoretical understanding of the relationship between the media and identity, where 'daily performances' are often 'ordered around media images' (1998:104), not least thanks to the presence of celebrity in the media (Holmes 2005:22). Dragičević-Šešić (1994:57) in fact used similar reasoning to perceive contemporary Serbian life as saturated with entertainment products, which became resources for social interaction. Her audiences' cultural space resembles Abercrombie and Longhurst's, where performance is constitutive of everyday life.

Douglas Kellner (1995:150–1) too understands products of media culture as providing 'symbolic environments' for individual expressions of belonging. He urges cultural studies to engage with 'major political events and crises' (e.g. the first Gulf War) as well as entertainment texts (1995:198). Kellner may be over-optimistic in wondering (1995:162) whether media culture will actually substitute the Andersonian imagined community of the nation as a framework for perceiving social life. Rather, as Paul James (1996:192) suggests, media culture is precisely one way of reproducing the nation as an abstraction built up of feelings of simultaneity with co-nationals and connection to one's predecessors. Kellner (1995:100) acknowledges the value of ethnography in understanding how audiences read texts, but demands it be complemented with a 'diagnostic critique' which 'uses history to read texts and texts to read history' (1995:116). This is exactly what Reana Senjković (2002:71) responds to in her analysis of Croatian visual culture.

Timothy Rice's argument that people make meaning out of music by inferring references, similarities and differences between a particular musical text and other things or concepts (Rice 2001:30) invites one to see pieces of music as texts – as Čolović or Senjković have done. Richard Dyer's work on stardom (1998), moreover, suggests that a textual approach is also valuable for understanding the meanings of particular performers and how this can affect the meanings attached to the music they make. Dyer invites us to see entertainment star personas as texts made up of the films (etc.) stars perform in, their off-screen public behaviour and the media texts (promotion, publicity, interview, scandal...) that circulate about them. Dyer's approach helps us understand the full extent of entertainment personalities, and enables us to integrate popular music into a broader conception of the media.

1.4.3 Other cultural products

Studies of other cultural forms are also relevant to understandings of popular music, especially those involving theories of consumption. Roger Silverstone saw commodification as 'a social process' of goods and commodities becoming 'symbolic objects' (1994:106), and like Frith drew on Bourdieu's 'distinction' as symbolic consumption while rejecting its reductive class focus (1994:115–6). Mike Featherstone too associates consumption with expressions of identity, and describes 'consumer culture' as the mediation of most 'cultural activities and signifying practices' through consumption (1995:75). Daniel Miller, a material culture anthropologist, focuses on objects being 'constituted as social forms' when owners/users invest them with connotations (1994:190). In contemporary society, these objects can be 'directly constitutive' of identities, social affiliations and lived practices (1994:215; see also Douglas and Isherwood 1996). Consumption, in other words, can be a means of locating oneself and others in a 'social space' with reference to the meanings of what is consumed, and how (Storey 2003:78). Since in socialist systems the acquisition of objects could represent 'a way of constituting [...] selfhood' against a socialist regime (Verdery 1996a:29), the link between consumption and identity might be especially strong in socialist and post-socialist culture.

John Urry's concept of the 'tourist gaze' is another basis for the Abercrombie/Longhurst view of spectacle in everyday life (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998:80–1). The 'tourist gaze' consists of expectations and practices which construct travel as a way to experience difference to everyday (non-tourist) experiences (Urry 2002:1). Non-tourist practices, especially cultural products (film, television, literature, recorded music, music video) which create anticipation for tourism, are integral to this process (2002:3). They also depend on an 'imaginative geography' (Chard 1999:10) with notions of the familiar/domestic and the other/foreign. If mass communications have 'transformed the tourist gaze' so that expectation and commodification of difference are no longer confined to specifically touristic practices (Urry 2002:74), this is another way music can be inseparable from wider cultural marketplaces: e.g., are the 'unique, autochthonic and ancient' selections from tradition in the presentation of Dalmatian tourism (Senjković 2006:206) reflected in Dalmatian popular music and its marketing?

This is relevant to the problematic exoticism of 'world music', which valorises 'rejuvenation, novelty, authenticity, originality, the "real", and the spiritual' (T Taylor 1997:19) however constructed or invented that supposed tradition might be, as with Bulgarian folk choirs (Buchanan 1997) or Goran Bregović's post-Yugoslav music

(Gourgouris 2002:342). South-east European critiques of globalisation frequently make this point. Ivaylo Ditchchev (2002:246–7) claims that positive valuations of local specificity there are actually responding to a foreign gaze which demands ‘exclusive resellers of local color’ and has replaced socialist-era modernist universalism, and Zala Volčič (2005c) also emphasises how self-conscious this strategy is.³⁵ These regionally-based questions invite one to situate south-east European music (etc.) within the globalised media/entertainment system.³⁶ Two opposing approaches are Veit Erlmann’s (1999), who sees ‘world music’ post-colonially as a western commodification of non-westerners’ difference, and Mark Slobin’s (1993), of ‘world music’ as flows of decentralised ‘micromusics’.³⁷

Marketing is another field where deliberately constructed collective identity is visible, as when Volčič argues that Serbian creative professionals have borrowed, reproduced and resold ‘exotic cultural constructions inherited from the West’ (2005c:168). Arlene Dávila, on Hispanic/Latino identity in marketing, sees media texts as communicating ‘categories and identity’ and mediating personal relationships within groups and societies (Dávila 2001:6), and argues that ‘commercial culture [...] must be considered as constitutive of contemporary identities’ since so many things are subject to commodification (2001:10). Some of her findings apply to the particular circumstances of American ethnopoltics, but others relating to the production of difference are more widely applicable. So is her methodological model of interviews with the producers and transmitters of texts (here posters and advertisements) followed by one-to-one and small-group interviews with receivers of texts to examine their negotiations of identity (Dávila 2001:181–2).

Studies of historical memory in film help us conceptualise nationalism in popular culture. Richard Slotkin is concerned with an American national narrative (the taming of the ever-threatening frontier), and traces it through literature, film, and politics from the 17th century to the present. He views the frontier myth as a legitimising resource for politicians, whereby ‘the *extraordinary* violence of myth’ is used ‘to *sanction* the ordinary violence of oppression and injustice’ (Slotkin 1992:192–3; *emph. orig.*) – echoing Čolović’s or Žanić’s work on ex-Yugoslavia. Susan Jeffords has also discussed the politicisation of

³⁵ See also Iordanova 2001:55–6; Kiossev 2002; Ugrešić 2004:189; on representations of the Balkans in film, see Iordanova 2001; Mišković 2006.

³⁶ For comparable cases of essentialisation/representation of difference in national popular musics, see Simon 2000; Jones-Bamman 2001; Pajala 2001; Lemish 2004; Gemie 2005; Björnberg 2007; Pajala 2007; Solomon 2007; Gluhović 2008; in Latin American and American Latino popular music, Cepeda 2001; Molina Guzmán and Valdivia 2004).

³⁷ Erlmann applies Fredric Jameson’s neo-Marxism, and Slobin applies Arjun Appadurai’s deterritorialised postmodernism (Stokes 2004:48–9). Shohat and Stam’s (1994) postcolonial critique of ‘Eurocentrism’ in the representation of difference and exoticism in the media in general is compatible with Erlmann.

an American historical narrative (literary and cinematic representations of the Vietnam War), which may be applicable to some representations of the ex-Yugoslav conflicts (Jeffords 1989:25; see Senjković 2002:201). However, Slotkin stands out because of his comprehensive attention to the role of myths: somewhat like Čolović, he understands them as ‘stories drawn from a society’s history’, which become ‘conventionalised and abstracted’ into resonant symbols which constitute ‘linguistic meaning and [...] personal and social “remembering”’ (Slotkin 1992:5). This ‘narrative’ structure of expressing ideology goes some way towards insulating the myth from critical analysis (1992:6; see Kertzer 1988:66–7). The confines of area studies regrettably seem to have left Slotkin and Čolović unaware of each other.

1.5 The nation and identity

1.5.1 Theories of the nation: primordialism and modernism

The major debate among theories of the nation is between primordialism and modernism – whether ethnic kinship and heritage produce nations, or whether nations are political resources with certain socio-economic preconditions. Ethno-symbolism, a variant of primordialism, supposes that a nation’s members have a shared belief in an eternal ‘tangible essence’ (Bellamy 2003:9). Thus Walker Connor (1994:204) claims that national symbols trigger ‘the nonrational core of the nation’, and Anthony Smith locates the foundations of nationalism in ‘ethnies’. These are ‘durable cultural communities’ which may become nations (Smith 1989:342–3), and possess ‘pre-existing cultural resources’ of community, history, territory, and destiny (Smith 2003:43). John Armstrong (1982:291) applies symbolic-interactionist views of ethnicity to pre-nationalist ‘nations’ and argues that ‘only the perception of group differences [...] as formulated in mythic substance’ separates many ethnic groups, allowing for a more nuanced interpretation of the ethno-national community than many primordialists’.³⁸

John Breuilly, a leading modernist, comments that primordialist arguments ‘that nationalism is an expression of the nation’ are appropriate only to nationalists, not scholars (1993:405). He instead relates nationalism explicitly to political ends, defining a ‘nationalist movement’ as one which ‘seeks to bind together people in a particular territory’ for the

³⁸ Bellamy (2003:8) criticises Armstrong for elsewhere retrospectively projecting a reified present: as Breuilly writes (1993:406), the eighteenth-century concept of ‘Germany’ (etc.) differed from the ‘Germany’ politically articulated today.

sake of gaining state power' (1993:381). Jyoti Puri similarly views the idea of the nation as a tool with which states achieve legitimacy through popular consent (2004:31). Perhaps the prime example of classic modernism, Ernest Gellner (1983), treats nationalism as an elite-activated theory of political legitimacy which invents the 'nation' as it goes along.³⁹ Mark Beissinger clarifies the importance of state 'coercive, material and normative power' in producing nationalism. He extends Gellner beyond education and high culture into states' capacity to 'dominate public discourse' and 'naturalise their preferred conceptions of nationhood' (1998:176–7).

Though Gellner alludes to nationalist intellectuals deliberately reifying national identity (1983:57–8), its contingent, fluid nature is emphasised even more by Rogers Brubaker. Brubaker suggests a relationship between nationalising states, their minorities, and minorities' external national 'homelands' in post-Communist political space (1996:58), in which all three elements are not entities but 'fields of differentiated and competing positions' (1996:8).⁴⁰ His constructivist focus opposes not only primordialism but also 'substantialism', i.e. attributing 'real, enduring existence to nations as collectivities' at all (1996:15). Smith has criticised instrumentalist approaches to nationalism for not explaining why ethnic and national identities produce greater attachment than other potential collective identities (e.g. class, region). Willingness to die for the nation/ethnic group is here the ultimate evidence of attachment (Smith 1995:39) – as if class- or region-based attachment has never motivated armed conflict. Smith's work on ethno-symbolic *content* is still useful for instrumentalists when it shows how continuity between 'pre-existing ethnic communities and modern nationalisms' is established with reference to traditions and myths (Puri 2004:182).⁴¹ However, his assumptions about shared belief are even more awkward from a cultural studies perspective which problematises concepts of audiences and meaning-making. Relating current theories of audience and ideology to the national community works better with Brubaker.

Benedict Anderson's description of the nation as an 'imagined political community' (1991:5) has inspired many theoretical and empirical works. Anderson argues that events started to be presented as simultaneous when eighteenth-century vernacular novels and newspapers appeared. Accompanying this was the simultaneous consumption of cultural products, which acted as a 'mass ceremony' mediating the relationship between 'the

³⁹ An example is Zala Volčič's work on Slovenian state television, placing national public broadcasting at the centre of 'the dominant means of ideological production' (2005c:288). The developments in her paper occurred concurrently to Croatian television acquiring a nationalising mission.

⁴⁰ Ang (1996:144–5) relates these tensions specifically to electronic translational media.

⁴¹ E.g. Čolović's work, or Vukušić (2005) and Schäuble (forthcoming) on Sinjska alka.

imagined world' and 'everyday life' (1991:35–6). Anderson, like Anthony Giddens (1991), recognises that narrative underpins individuals' senses of self, and separates 'narrative' from 'memory', but is chiefly interested in individuals as a metaphor for *national* narratives (Anderson 1991:204–5).

Anderson's 'imagined community' has often been applied to media audiences.⁴² It may refer to a national media audience (Hartley 1992:103), or be extended towards any abstractly-conceived group e.g. fan communities (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998:115). However, some authors question why Anderson restricts himself to print when the speed of electronic media produces more immediate simultaneity (Schlesinger 1991:164; Hartley 1992:104), and Anne McClintock argues that 'mass national *commodity spectacle*' contributed more to the imagined community than did print capitalism, which was restricted to a 'small literate elite' for much of his period (1995:374). Anderson's language/print focus does risk overlooking the kinship/descent myths present in certain concepts of nation (Gilroy 1992[1987]:44–5), but the idea of an 'imagined community' remains influential. Anthony Cohen's 'symbolic construction of community' (Cohen 1985) has sometimes been usefully combined with Anderson, e.g. by Rob Shields (1991:62–3) or Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998:114–5). Edward Larkey's study of Austrian popular music also draws on Cohen to understand the national community, but unusually adds Smith's ethno-symbolism to draw attention to the embedding of the 'symbolically constructed community' in 'historical space and time' through 'daily social practice' (1993:2). Yet the implicit contingency gives Larkey less in common with Smith, more with recent social-practice-based theories of nationhood.

1.5.2 Theories of the nation: social practice

Anderson belongs to what Puri terms a 'culturalist' school of nationalism (2004:60), which also includes Hobsbawm and Ranger, Stuart Hall, and Homi Bhabha. Hobsbawm and Ranger discuss symbolic practices which 'attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past' to legitimise authorities or value-systems (Hobsbawm 1983:1, 9). Some 'invented traditions' are entirely retrospective, like Highland Scottish culture (Trevor-Roper 1983:15), while others attach new contexts and meanings to existing traditions (Morgan 1983:57). Hall draws on 'imagined community' to view the nation as a 'symbolic

⁴² E.g. by Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998:115), John Hartley (1992:103), Roger Silverstone (1994:29), Ien Ang (1996:145), Philip Schlesinger (1991:164), Douglas Kellner (1995:162), Dona Kolar-Panov (1997:98), Garry Crawford (2004:53–4), Cornel Sandvoss (2005:55), Arlene Dávila (2001:83), and Ella Shohat and Robert Stam (1994:101–2). See also Aksoy and Robins 2000:356 on transnational satellite television. Zygmunt Bauman (1992:xx) has speculated that the contemporary political economy is attention-based and leads imagined communities to compete for public attention through spectacle.

formation' or a 'system of representation' (1993:355). Bhabha, meanwhile, argues that 'nationhood' is 'produced performatively' at 'interstices' which occur when cultural differences are articulated (2004:2–3).

The common ground between Bhabha and Hobsbawm/Ranger is the implication that claims to cultural authenticity, fixity or tradition are not just oversimplifications but also discursive strategies which aim to legitimise power relations (e.g. Bhabha 2004:94–5). They differ through Bhabha's interest in hybridity (refined by Pieterse (2004)). Hybridity is a problematic concept for several reasons. Stokes (2004:59–62) points out that discourses of hybridity may themselves be exclusionary if they selectively privilege ingredients: Čolović (2004a; 2006), for instance, shows how new Serbian 'world music' emphasises the medieval Balkans' hybridity but systematically excludes any Turkish/Ottoman historico-cultural legacy. Talking about hybridity also runs the risk of overlooking ongoing structural inequalities between the groups involved – and may reify the groups supposed to have been blended (Hutnyk 2000). Nonetheless, south-east Europe is a context where much effort has been put into reifying boundaries despite strong tendencies towards mixing, and the relative economic positions of (e.g.) Croats and Serbs are not a direct equivalent for the imperial history of Britain and South Asia. Deconstructing ideas of 'authenticity' in south-east Europe is therefore still a valuable thing to do.

Michael Billig's theory of 'banal' (everyday) nationalism may have become the most significant contribution to nationalism studies since the 'imagined community'. It has been praised by some anthropological, social-interaction-based identity theorists (Jenkins 1997:159; Eriksen 2002:101), and Edensor (2002:11–12) and Bellamy (2003:22–3) commend it. Billig (1995:45–6) argues that nationhood is promoted by everyday reproductions as well as set-piece public events/commemorations – an idea anticipated by Paul Gilroy (1992[1987]:62) – and that nationalism is a constant condition of the modern state. Billig's nations are 'daily reproduced as nations and their citizenry as nationals' along with 'a whole complex of beliefs, assumptions, habits, representations and practices' (1995:6) – an example is the symbolism of Croatian currency, which revived a medieval currency's name and banalised connotations of 'tradition and sovereignty' by reviving a medieval currency's name (1995:41–2).⁴³ These techniques should be seen as overtly ideological, where 'ideology operates to make people forget that their world has been historically constructed' (1995:37). Billig's colleague Michael Pickering views stereotyping

⁴³ His understanding of Tuđman's attitude to the NDH regime (which used the same name) is oversimplistic, but the process whereby 'the past is inhabited in the present in a dialectic of forgotten remembrance' (1995:42–3) is still significant.

in the same way ‘as a common-sense rhetorical strategy of naturalising order and control’ (2001:45). Examples of a particular national narrative (Serb victimhood) reproduced through everyday discursive practice are given by Helena Zdravković (2006) and Jelena Obradović (2008); Pilvi Torsti (2004) relates banal nationalism to the ‘history culture’ of post-war Bosnia.

‘Banal nationalism’ need not be a top-down model even though concerned with ideology: Billig himself warns not to take the ‘national “we”’ for granted, since the re-writing of national history ‘reflects current balances of hegemony’ (1995:71). His main influence on later studies (Jenkins, Eriksen, Bellamy, Edensor) is his allusion to a *continual* and *daily* level of nationhood – although Bruce Kapferer anticipated this when locating ‘the potency of nationalism’ in ‘nationalist traditions’ and ‘the practices of everyday life’ (1988:20). This understanding shares much with Hall’s view that meaning is produced whenever individuals appropriate ‘cultural “things”’ and ‘incorporate them [...] into the everyday rituals and practices of everyday life’ (Hall 1997c:3).

Edensor integrates popular culture into a theory of nationhood by applying Billig, arguing that ‘national space [...] must be domesticated, replicated in local contexts and understood as part of everyday life’ in order to be powerful (2002:65). He criticises Smith for ‘a reductive view of culture’ based only on myth (2002:8–9) – though it is also worth asking how popular culture could be *inflected* with myth to reproduce nationhood. In the contemporary world the reach of contemporary mass media may lessen the impact of Gellnerian national cultural elites (2002:141) (but are media producers, as Bauman (1992:17) suggests, their successors?), and the resources of popular culture lead to a ‘dynamic and dialogic’ sense of national identity beyond elite-based inventions-of-tradition (2002:17). Edensor also draws on Jenkins’s theory of identity to argue that contemporary boundary-formation processes – distinguishing tastes, mobilising ‘reified notions of history and roots’ or exploiting ‘popular symbolic images, rituals, sites and objects’ – frequently draw their symbolic repertoire from popular culture (2002:24–5).

Edensor’s view of identity as a performance derives from the gender theorist Judith Butler (Edensor 2002:70–1), who ‘understand[s] gender as a *relation* among socially constituted subjects in specifiable contexts’ (Butler 1990:10). Some performances intentionally signal identity, while others are decoded as such anyway (cf. Jenkins’s discussion of identification vs. categorisation), and the performance metaphor draws attention to the dynamics involved in reproducing identities and ‘(re)constructing a sense of collectivity’ (Edensor 2002:69). For Butler, identity-signalling acts and gestures are

‘performative’ when their identity claims are *‘fabrications’* composed of bodily and other signals (Butler 1990:136). This can easily be transferred from gender to a constructivist conception of nationhood, and Diana Taylor (1997:91–2) prefigured Edensor’s application of Butler to national identity in her study of the Argentinean dictatorship: Taylor, whose understanding is also grounded in Anderson’s ‘nation-ness’ (1997:29), argues that national or gender identity is subject to ‘coercive mechanisms of identification’ even in everyday life outside crisis situations, and depends on ‘being seen doing’ and ‘identifying with the appropriate performative model’ (1997:92).

1.5.3 Symbol and myth as legitimization

The notion of legitimization necessarily raises questions of what is legitimised, how, and in whose interests (Verdery 1999:51). Theories of nationalism suggest how the ‘what’ can be politically constituted; meanwhile, the study of myth and symbol helps show how legitimisation may occur. Ex-Yugoslav anthropologists’ work has suggested the role of myths and symbols in constructing any group identity (e.g. Čolović 2002; Senjković 2002; Žanić 2007). David Kertzer’s stress on the ‘massive effort at symbolic construction’ required to naturalise the ‘new, abstract entity’ of the nation (1988:178–9) is highly relevant to former Yugoslavia, where legitimacy symbolic constructions largely rely on historical myths. Bruce Kapferer (1988:6–7, 76) finds that in political cultures as distinct as Sri Lanka and Australia myths and legends still act as a legitimising resource, and that since myths in this view are always contextualised by ideology the study of myth necessarily requires attention to politics – and vice versa. Elizabeth Tonkin (1992:97) warns that narratives of the past are continually undergoing re-presentation. This, however, should focus attention precisely on the instrumentalisation of the past – as seen by Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) in various ceremonial and literary practices, or John Storey (2003:85) in the entertainment media’s role as ‘memory industries’.

If Kapferer accounts for the temporal dimension of myth, Rob Shields (1991:6) accounts for a *spatial* dimension which gives sites socially-constructed meaning. Spatially-based imagery can carry ‘central social myths which underwrite ideal divisions between classes, groups and regions’ (1991:47), and are mediated into the practice of everyday life (1991:7). The use of ‘stereotyped images of places [...] as a conceptual shorthand’ (illustrative metaphor) in everyday interaction (1991:26) is the basis of Shields’s concept of ‘spatialisation’, i.e. the use of spatial symbolisms to articulate community-defining classifications and ‘imaginary geographies’ (1991:29). Such frameworks use (implicitly

ideological) techniques of oversimplification, stereotyping, and labelling to transfer places from the geographical world into 'the symbolic realm of cultural significations' (1991:47). Spatialisation is significant not only because it points to how 'symbolic' (Bakić-Hayden and Hayden 1992) geographies evolve,⁴⁴ but also because the same logic may extend to metaphors based on other referents such as cultural products (e.g. Frith 1996:22). Moreover, it underpins the mediation between 'home' and 'homeland' which often occurs in nationalist imagery (see Applegate 1990; Confino 1997; Morley 2000). This imagery translates easily into artefacts which 'brought the nation to mind anytime and anywhere, without special celebratory events' (Confino 1997:10) – again recalling Billig's banal nationalism.

The political anthropology of post-Communism, such as Catherine Wanner's research (1996; 1998) into constructions of a separate Ukrainian identity during and after the fall of the USSR, is particularly concerned with symbolic legitimation. Wanner's case studies include a music festival, first held in 1989, which developed nationalist overtones symbolically incorporating the Russified east into the Ukrainian whole.⁴⁵ Wanner foregrounds historical representations as a form of symbolic power which can transform historical and eventually national consciousness by 'cultivating a sense of belonging' and linking 'an individual [...] to a state' (1998:xix–xxi), while Vladimir Tismaneanu argues that prevailing post-Communist political culture has retained the Communist 'ideological surrogates' of ethnonationalist, supra-individual 'mythologies of salvation' (1998:7), and myth becomes a replacement solution 'to the quest for identity' (1998:24). However, Tismaneanu assumes that myth-based politics is peculiar to post-Communist or non-democratic states (1998:25). As Kertzer, Kapferer, Slotkin etc. demonstrate, recourse to mythic symbolism is fundamental not only in authoritarian or transitional political systems but also in established democracies.

Zdislaw Mach, like Kapferer, views politics and conflict as symbolically constituted, defining myth (like Barthes) as 'a symbolic text' whose narrative 'transmits values, norms and patterns essential and fundamental for a given culture' (Mach 1993:58–9; see Barthes 1993). Politicians then strive to alter the public's 'symbolic model' and use symbolic 'eradication', 'creation', 'innovation' and 'profanation' to 'create a reality consistent with the desired state of affairs' (Mach 1993:51–2): e.g., when ruling parties (like HDZ) add their own iconography to state symbolism to naturalise the 'unification of national and political

⁴⁴ See Fleming 2000 on the Haydens' conception of Orientalism.

⁴⁵ Other case studies include monuments, state commemorations, and school curricula. Music remains a political resource in Ukraine: see Klid 2007 on the Orange Revolution.

identity' (1993:106). Monopolising 'symbolic life' may help sustain political power even amid social tension if the state ideology can become the only 'symbolic interpretation of the social world' available (1993:108), so it suits troubled states to restrict competing symbolic systems.⁴⁶ Ex-Yugoslav examples include the social 'destruction of alternatives' in 1990s Serbia (Gordy 1999), the narrative frames of reference monopolised by the 1990s Croatian government (Bellamy 2003:82), and the revision of 'official memory' throughout ex-Yugoslavia (Jović 2004).

1.5.4 Approaches to identity

Mach (1993:5) draws explicitly on the symbolic-interactionist concept of identity used by Richard Jenkins and Anthony Cohen. In particular, Cohen's 'symbolic construction of community' is fundamental for my understanding of identity narratives – both the narratives of national (and other) identity in cultural texts, and the personal and group identity-narratives of individuals who draw meaning from them. For Cohen, community members '(a) have something in common with each other, which (b) distinguishes them in a significant way from the members of other putative groups', and 'community' is expressed through perceptions of boundaries (Cohen 1985:12–13). Such boundaries are inherently 'relational', i.e. they 'mark the community *in relation to* other communities' (1985:58). The differences in members' understanding of belonging must not outweigh their perceived similarity (1985:21), and 'members find their identities as individuals through their occupancy of the community's social space' (1985:109). The boundary therefore provides a reference-point for the individual's self-presentation in social life (1985:117).

Emphases on the symbolic boundary as a site of identity formation also recall Fredrik Barth's work on ethnicity, which Richard Jenkins extends to social identity in general. Jenkins, like Cohen, sees identity as based on a similarity/difference dynamic (Jenkins 1996:3–4). He argues that all identities are social, achieved through identification and categorisation (1996:12), and refers to Erving Goffman's concept of performative self-presentation – though later he prefers Bourdieu's idea of taken-for-granted 'habitus' over Goffman's rational decisions (1996:22). These performances are expressed through 'a wide palette of accessories', among them 'external resources' like 'clothes, pets, religious practices, house, music' etc. (1996:50; see also Russell 1987). Another resource is categorising others' difference (1996:83). These social identities need a temporal

⁴⁶ Senjković (2002:273) follows Mach in seeing symbolic continuity as a manipulable political resource.

dimension, since claiming/attributing identity entails some sort of continuity (1996:27–8). This makes Jenkins relevant to historical myths and narratives, as shown by Ger Duijzings (2000)'s work on Kosovo.

Jenkins and Cohen often overlap, though Cohen deals more with the nature of boundaries and Jenkins with the practices of interaction. Indeed, Jenkins warns against reifying the boundary and wonders whether Cohen, who has studied peripheral communities, exaggerates the uniformity of larger political units (Jenkins 1996:98, 109). Yet Cohen neither focuses specifically on large-scale units nor assumes monolithic tendencies. Rather, his recognition of idiosyncratic experiences (varying meanings) *nonetheless* connected by a common symbol parallels Kertzer's discussions of political symbolism and ritual. Jenkins has also dealt specifically with *ethnic* groups (1997), which he describes as produced by the same dynamic. Jenkins situates himself in the post-Barthian tradition, but notes that this school pays more attention to identification than categorisation – yet categorisation, when identities are attributed by others, can affect the identity experiences of the categorised group (Jenkins 1997:72). Thomas Hylland Eriksen, another social-constructivist writer on ethnicity, interprets identity politics as the evocation of personal experience in political symbolism and rhetoric to harness idiosyncratic meaning through myths (2002:159). Other tactics include contrasting 'first-comers' with 'invaders' (attaching political significance to history, genealogy and space), and reducing social complexity to 'simple contrasts' to avoid 'cross-cutting ties' which might complicate personal loyalties (2002:160).

These theories of identity are implicitly underpinned by Anthony Giddens' idea (1991:5) of 'the reflexive project of the self', i.e. 'the sustaining of coherent, yet continually revised, biographical narratives'. Media messages in general (Thompson 1995) and popular music in particular (DeNora 1999) are resources in this reflexive construction. The significance of Giddens' work is twofold. Firstly, Giddens introduces the idea of 'regimes' of particular areas of social practice (e.g. food or dress) which externalise narratives of self-identity (1991:62). The interaction between social convention and personal inclination is the site of identity, while a 'lifestyle', a material expression of identity, is a 'more or less integrated set of practices' (1991:81).⁴⁷ More fundamentally, Giddens uses a more extensive concept of identity than those above, and defines it as encompassing 'the self as reflexively understood by the person in terms of her or his biography' (1991:53). If Cohen, Jenkins and Eriksen

⁴⁷ Yelf-narratives may sometimes *minimise* an individual's capacity for agency, e.g. if establishing an identity of victimhood (Ballinger 2002:234; see also Sluga 1999).

illustrate the social practices involved in performing membership of a collective, Giddens' extra layer involves reconciling all these situational identities into the totality of an individual's conception of the self, which he understands as 'the capacity to keep a particular narrative going' by integrating new external events into it (1991:54).⁴⁸ From Giddens, therefore, we can derive one sort of 'narrative of [...]identity' (Thompson 1995:210). This sense relates to an individual's sense of self in relation to particular collectivities, and thus to his or her expression or performance of them through social practice; the collective and national form of identity narrative, 'the ideal image of the nation' (Meyer 2000:9), appears in the work of Benedict Anderson.⁴⁹ One might say that the relationship between these levels of narrative determines the points at which 'people's actions and desires are mediated through institutions of power' (McClintock 1995:15), and the limits of individual agency.

1.6 Research questions

The existing literature on popular music, the nation and identity raises not only empirical questions about how these factors were related in Croatia but also theoretical questions about our approach to researching south-east Europe, popular culture or both.

Empirically, it would contribute to the historiography of the Yugoslav wars if the 'media and war' thesis could be extended beyond news reporting into other areas of media activity which were present in everyday life. Contemporary social-practice-based approaches to nationalism, as already demonstrated for Croatia by Alex Bellamy (2003), suggest that national narratives of identity are present in many aspects of culture and society: a case study of popular music can show how narratives were contested in that particular field and how they interacted with narratives in others. Meanwhile, cultural studies and constructivist approaches to identity suggest that debates about music are just as important in narrating identity as songs themselves might be. Since the establishment of the Croatian state was structured around a nationalist ideology which subordinated other levels of belonging under national identity, some of the most pressing questions involve the intersection between nationhood and popular music:

⁴⁸ Manuel Castells similarly argues that particular identities (as nationals, relatives, etc.), which may or may not have originated from a dominant institution, are only accepted when individuals integrate them into their own self-narratives (2004:7).

⁴⁹ See also Verdery's two levels of 'the individual's sense of self' and 'the identity of the collective whole' (Verdery 1996b:229, cited at Bellamy 2003:27).

- How was the nation defined (and how were these definitions contested) through popular music?
- How did individuals narrate their own relationship to the nation using popular music as a symbolic point of reference – or were other levels of personal/group identity more relevant?
- How were these processes affected by political change (2000 being an approximate turning-point)?

The answers to these questions will illustrate how individuals' expressions and narratives of identity are articulated within, and constrained by, wider ideological contexts (the collective narratives which constitute their social field and the symbolic basis of their community) and by structural factors which restrict the scope of cultural space.

Besides these nation-centric questions, this thesis can also engage with debates over identity formation in south-east Europe, which have been dominated by two issues: the effects of the collapse of socialism and the conceptual framework of 'Balkanism'.

Although Stef Jansen's research (2005a, 2005b) into anti-nationalist discourses in Croatia and Serbia discussed the role of popular music in this symbolism, his research took place at a particular historical moment of post-war consolidation, and the situation after ten further years of political and social change may not be the same. Croatian popular music also allows us to go beyond a narrowly post-Yugoslav viewpoint and set Croatia in the context of cultural production elsewhere in south-east Europe. Examining these transnational factors raises the question of whether the nation is always the most suitable level of analysis for researching these cultural developments. Although the parameters of this research were focused on one state for the sake of a coherent research area, the taken-for-granted Yugoslav cultural space of the 1980s has been replaced by a network of cross-border relationships with varying degrees of fraughtness and formality, and cultural production within this space has also been affected by regional, continental and global processes. One should therefore reflect on whether certain questions simply cannot be fully answered by confining oneself to a particular state.

Drawing on the (predominantly Anglophone⁵⁰) discipline of cultural studies to answer questions about culture and entertainment in contemporary Croatia does provide valuable opportunities to research Croatia beyond the context of post-conflict studies or transitology. This is not to minimise the impact of the war years on contemporary Croatian society, but to recognise that a strictly post-conflict paradigm may not always lead

⁵⁰ See Gilroy 1993; Stratton and Ang 1996.

us to the most informative questions, especially in a supposedly youth-oriented field such as popular music where today's teenagers will have had little first-hand experience of the war. Croatian, Serbian and Bosnian studies of popular music in the 1980s (Čolović 1985; Prica 1988, 1991; Dragičević-Šešić 1988, 1994) emphasised the role of music in the identity narratives and everyday life of individuals, families and groups, whereas studies from the 1990s tend to emphasise nationality, ideology and political manipulation: both angles have their part to play in explaining the music/identity relationship in the present day. However, applying concepts developed in long-established capitalist democracies to other contexts also has its drawbacks, as indicated by Katherine Verdery's warning (1991:5) that 'capital' may have too different a meaning in post-socialist societies for the idea of 'cultural capital' to be relevant. The structural position of popular music vis-à-vis the state may likewise be too different for the frameworks of UK/US popular music studies to be uncritically grafted onto Croatia. While striving to understand the empirical questions addressed by this research, these broader methodological issues should also be borne in mind.

2 Music and nationalism, 1991–2000

The most striking articulation of narratives of identity through popular music in Croatia occurred during the Homeland War (June 1991–August 1995). Croatian anthropologists' interest in music as a component of everyday life (Ceribašić 1993; Prica 1993; Senjković 1993; Bonifačić 1998; Pettan 1998) or political symbolism (Senjković 2002) has made this the best-researched aspect of popular music in Croatia. However, a historical account of music which deals with national identity can situate these musical texts in their political context. If popular music operated as a state communicative instrument, then exposures of ideological contradictions through music would also show that the production and dissemination of state ideology was contested. Meanings produced through music were further supplemented by off-stage meanings created when musicians discussed the war or their own experience of it (e.g. as soldiers or as traumatised victims). Moreover, the history of popular music and the state did not stop in 1995: music was still used as a form of pro-state communication about certain issues, particularly eastern Slavonia and the army.

The argument that the media were integral to the independence campaigns and war efforts as Yugoslavia disintegrated is now an important strand in the conflicts' historiography (Thompson 1994; Skopljanac Brunner et al. 2000; MacDonald 2002; Senjković 2002; Žanić 2007; Žarkov 2007): Dubravka Žarkov (2007:2), for instance, speaks of a 'media war' concurrent with the physical 'ethnic war'. Often state media are also seen as key in making ethno-national identity the most important level of belonging during the 1990s (Hayden 1996; Gagnon 2004; Erjavec and Volčič 2007; Žarkov 2007). Relating the media and nationhood literature to that on the content of popular music expands our understanding of the 'media war' beyond news reporting. Music as part of everyday life (played at home, in shops, in cars and so forth) could arguably reach the public in contexts where news reporting did not. Elites' opportunities for political communication were therefore enhanced by using music as an additional medium.

The emphasis placed on ethno-national identity by the 1990s Croatian state, which strove to make ethnicity into individuals' primary level of belonging, also invites nationalism to be examined through ideology and myth. Paul Gilroy (1992[1987]), Michael Billig (1995) and Rogers Brubaker (1996) see nationalism as contingent and continually reproduced, challenging concepts of nationalism as a single or coherent idea. Indeed, for Brubaker nationalism is not even a single discourse but a discursive field where

interpretations and their supporters struggle for hegemony. Alex Bellamy (2003) has already used such an approach to understand the production of Croatian nationhood in Croatia in a range of social, political and cultural spaces. Meanwhile, this perspective on nationalism suggests that nationalist ideology ought to be seen as a conceptual map, not a directly motivating force (Breuilly 1993:13). The next step in analysing ideology is to see how it enters the 'ordinary consciousness of daily life' (Kapferer 1988:82–3) –through everyday, 'banal' (Billig 1995) reminders of nationhood, and through the narrative expression of ideology in the form of myth (Slotkin 1992:6). Myth can be thought of as a 'symbolic text' which claims (and is recognised as claiming) a group's values (Mach 1993:58). Investigating the musical texts' content can show the operation of myth and ideology in a way that analysing the media's institutional structure cannot.

Although nationalism aims to create a homogenous ethno-national community, it is worth questioning how deep that homogeneity actually is: disagreement about values is common and needs managing if the community is to be maintained. David Kertzer's (1987) work on political symbolism and Anthony Cohen's (1985) theory of community construction both suggest that such disagreements can be resolved by constituting the group through agreement on the symbols of belonging, which members express through rituals and everyday social interaction. This viewpoint – that varying interpretations of the nation become glossed over through agreement on the symbols of belonging – involves a suspicion of neo-Durkheimian claims that rituals entail genuine social cohesion.

Nick Couldry (2003:47) thus argues that the idea of the media as a social centre disseminating information is itself an ideological myth which naturalises the media's growing importance in organising social practices. Music as part of the media would clearly contribute to this myth – as seen in the state broadcaster HRT (Croatian Radio and Television)'s apparent view of music's role in national life. Yet beyond legitimising an apparent social centre, the everyday nature of popular music provides a daily vehicle for reproducing common-sense beliefs about the nation (Croft 2006:204). In 1990s Croatia, popular music intersected with powerful and privileged discourses about national history, westernness/Europeanness and the legitimacy of Croatia's wartime actions. Chapter 3 shows how 1990s debates over popular music set boundaries around the national and political community. However, this chapter addresses a much more foregrounded narration of national identity: songs about the nation, at peace and war.

2.1 Music and the media during the Homeland War

2.1.1 State television and the war

The Croatian president Franjo Tuđman's narrative of the war depicted Croatia as a democratic nation-state fulfilling its aspirations for independence, reluctantly forced to fight for freedom when its peaceful secession was opposed by nationalist and expansionist Serbian aggression (blamed both for the Yugoslav state/party apparatus and the Croatian Serb rebellion). Croatia's June 1991 declaration of independence was not internationally recognised until January 1992, causing acute sensitivity meanwhile about Croatia's image abroad: politicians and editors viewed anything which could construe Croatia as the aggressor as extremely damaging. Besides the domestic public and foreign decision-makers, another audience for the presidential narrative was the Croatian diaspora. Diaspora Croats anxiously watched Croatian news on satellite television and video-tapes, and fundraised for refugees and the newly-founded National Guard/Croatian Army (Kolar-Panov 1997). It was therefore all the more important for the media narrative of the war to reflect presidential emphases.

By the time Croatia declared independence, HRT (formerly the Zagreb studio of the Yugoslav broadcaster) had effectively been reconstituted as a national broadcaster on the same logic with which the republic became a state – extrication from the Yugoslav framework (6.1.1). Its staff had a broad consensus around the binary narrative of peace/freedom versus aggression/expansionism. Zala Volčič's discussion of RTV Slovenija, which developed similarly, resembles HRT. Both institutions believed in a 'national public space' where the broadcaster would integrate and produce the nation (Volčič 2005b:289). They transformed from socialist institutions promoting a Yugoslav working-class 'imaginary community' into vehicles for the 'systematic "nationalisation" of public speech', but retained the underlying myth of existing to promote whatever state narrative there might be (2005b:292–3). Accordingly, they articulated specific views of the past and present which 'legitimate[d] a claim to cultural autonomy, historical unity and political independence' (2005b:295). The shift began well before the independence declarations, but accelerated once both countries found themselves at war with their 'former neighbours' – generally a euphemism for Serbia.

News became HRT's key product in July–August 1991 when the Yugoslav army (JNA) occupied eastern Slavonia. HTV1 moved to rolling news branded *Rat za slobodu* (*The war for freedom*), retitled *Za slobodu* (*For freedom*) after a few days. Other channels temporarily ceased

broadcasting when transmitters were damaged, but resumed later in the year. Given the official narrative, HRT war reporting's basic aims were not at issue, but how to achieve them was more contentious. The tabloid *Globus*, which argued for a more proactive war effort and tended to sympathise with the HOS (Croatian Defence Force) militia rather than the state,⁵¹ expressed dismay that HTV held back the strongest images. In September 1991, it printed content guidelines signed by the news editor Miroslav Lilić and his deputy Tomislav Marčinko: no 'inhabitants' crying and wailing', nor images of seriously wounded soldiers, and soldiers' death tolls should always be accompanied by formulae such as 'they fell for the freedom of Croatia' or 'gave their lives in defence [na braniku] of the homeland'. Reports of defeat should always emphasise the enemy's 'destructive force' and 'unscrupulousness' and finish with an optimistic promise like 'But we will bring freedom back to our Kijevo' (Donat 1991). Viewed critically, this consensus could be seen as a 'nationalization [...] of the public sphere' which validated a 'dominant common sense' and the ruling party's narrative (Erjavec and Volčič 2007:13). Popular music which interacted with other media thus did so within this discursive field.

2.1.2 Popular music and television

The most powerful recording-industry actor early in the war was HRT itself, not the main Zagreb record label Jugoton, which had been in financial difficulties even before Croatia's declaration of independence. Several of its best-selling artists from Bosnia had left in 1989–90 for various financial reasons, and it also suffered small-scale boycotts when the tabloid *Slobodni tjednik* accused it of producing 'Četnik' cassettes for the Serbian Orthodox Church (Stipić 1990). Its assets in Serbia (5.5m DM and 35% of Jugoton's market) were seized when Croatia seceded from Yugoslavia (Mikac 1991). Rebranded as Croatia Records (CR), its focus in late 1991 was the release of patriotic compilations. HRT, meanwhile, was directly commissioning new patriotic songs in late 1991, giving existing ones airplay, organising and funding large-scale music projects and enabling audio and video recording. Two HRT productions, Tomislav Ivčić's *Stop the war in Croatia* and Hrvatski band aid's *Moja domovina* (*My homeland*), were among the war years' most iconic songs.

HTV's near-instant revision of *Za slobodu* gave patriotic music a particular stimulus. The first format (many short scheduled programmes) was widely criticised, forcing HTV to introduce something more flexible at short notice. The many gaps of indefinite length

⁵¹ HOS: the Croatian Party of Right (HSP)'s militia.

could be conveniently filled by musical numbers: HTV tendered for new patriotic songs on 30 August, and *ZS* got its first musical blocks less than a fortnight later. During the war months of 1991–92, when air-raids, power-cuts and refugee flows severely disrupted everyday life (Feldman, Prica and Senjković 1993), HTV's sponsorship of patriotic music may even have helped sustain domestic music-making as it sustained domestic film.

Responsibility for music at HTV during the war followed two chains of command: *ZS*, as news, came under Lilić, but Ksenija Urličić's music and entertainment (*Zabavno-glazbeni*) department reported to the head of HRT, Antun Vrdoljak. This made for potential editorial disagreements, and the departments certainly viewed the wartime function of music differently. For the *ZS* team, popular music served as a form of communication. One behind-the-scenes report described the musical editor Zvonko Varošaneć hearing that a 20km-long army column had left Belgrade and asking his staff to play *Hrvatine* (*Super-Croats*), a rousing new military march about Croat men defying the JNA.⁵² He explained: 'If we play Đuka Čaić's "Hrvatine", it's mainly a sign that something bad is going on. [...] If strength and morale are needed, we play "Moja domovina"' (Ostoja 1991b). A Yugoslav naval advance towards Korčula was met by playing Oliver Dragojević and Klapa Vela Luka, who all came from there (Fabijanović 1991). Communication was also the aim of *Gardijada*, which aimed to connect soldiers with families/friends through requests.

Urličić, meanwhile, viewed programming more as an escape from wartime reality. She cleared space for Christmas programming 'despite the wartime situation' (*Arena* 1991), put on a special New Year's Eve edition of the comedy/variety show *Jel' me netko tražio?* (*Anyone called?*), and developed the music show *Sedma noć* (*Seventh night*) as HTV's Sunday-evening centrepiece. Yet Urličić's policy too responded to the war, bearing in mind that television 'went into the homes of people who have lost someone' or 'have someone at war' (Muzaferija 1991b). *Sedma noć*, broadcast from a different city every week, was deliberately devised as a symbolic integration of the nation during fierce resentment towards Zagreb in Dalmatia (where the war's siege conditions had more impact) and between refugees and hosts.⁵³ Urličić remembered one Split edition as the only Zagreb programme 'not to be jeered' there, despite the 'electric' atmosphere; instead, 'people from

⁵² This must have been quite early in *Hrvatine*'s life; it was later de-playlisted amid unease at its political messages (2.2.1).

⁵³ On poor host-refugee relations, see Čapo Žmegač 1999. Anti-refugee sentiment was also negatively portrayed in HTV's 1994 film *Svaki put kad se rastajemo* (*Every time we break up*), following a father who fled to Zagreb with his daughter after fighting to Vukovar. Unreasonable bureaucrats were returning him to the front anyway, while various grotesques mistreated the daughter.

Split greeted people from Zagreb, Čakovec, Osijek and Split... *Sedma noć* connected' (Radović 1993).⁵⁴

The symbolic integration of the nation was also pursued through another of Urličić's responsibilities, the televised pop-festival network. Inherited from the Yugoslav system (see Rasmussen 2002:41–5), it was recontextualised into national/Croatian festivals for domestic musicians only. Existing festivals (Splitski festival, Zagrebfest) were joined by Zadarfest (founded 1993), Brodfest (1992), Pula Arenafest (1994–97), and another Split-based festival MHJ (Melodies of the Croatian Adriatic, 1993–2003). Most festivals depended on HTV sponsorship, and favouritism and corruption allegations annually marred the festival season. Besides the explicitly-patriotic Brodfest, many other festivals in 1991–92 spotlighted patriotic songs to reflect the war effort. Even though it signalled Croatia's separation from Yugoslavia, this practice was not an innovation: Zagrebfest introduced a 'Revolutionary, Patriotic and Pioneer Songs' evening in 1980 (when Tito died), and Splitski festival had similarly had 'Ustanak i more' ('The [Partisan] uprising and the sea'). One *Globus* article complaining about the glut of dashed-off patriotic songs at SF 1991 even compared it to Ustanak i more, despite the ideological break (Filipović 1991).

As *Sedma noć* might have suggested, both Lilić and Urličić ultimately viewed music as an accompaniment to HTV's broader nationalising aims. Urličić happily converted criticisms of her proud HDZ loyalism – such as one complaint that her television policy equalled 'the homeland, the nation, the family and the church' – into testaments to her moral upbringing (*Globus* 1996). After the liberation of Knin (August 1995), the official end of the war, Urličić's department was the first besides news to broadcast from Knin's new HRT studio (Mikac and Relja 1995). A ceremonial concert on the Knin fortress less than ten days after liberation was apparently her idea, and she even wrote the lyrics for one song, Marinella Malić's *Domovino, ti si naša majka* (*Homeland, you're our mother*) (Rožman 1995a).⁵⁵ Lilić too appears to have influenced certain lyrics. He might have ensured *Moja domovina* actually mentioned 'Croatia' (Beraković 1992),⁵⁶ and the manager of the dance group Electro Team said that Lilić had altered one or two words in their debut *Molitva za mir* (*Prayer for peace*)

⁵⁴ Dalmatian audiences had still booed Zagreb singers at certain shows. The Dalmatian singer Mišo Kovač claimed credit for averting a riot at one Split *Sedma noć* by reminding the audience that 'the *purgeri* [lit. burghers – i.e. Zagreb inhabitants] are not our enemy. It's known who our enemies are. You know who's telling you that' (Rožman 1994c) – implying Serbs as the common enemy of all Croats, while alluding to his teenage son's death.

⁵⁵ Besides the mother/homeland, 'the Commander-in-Chief [Tuđman] is our wise father' ('mudri otac Vrhovnik je naš') – a much more direct reference to Tuđman than songs usually made.

⁵⁶ Another source (Muzaferija 1992) claimed the insistence had come from the composer, Zrinko Tutić.

before it could be aired (Pukanić 1993a).⁵⁷ However, HTV's most direct influence over music was sponsoring song/video projects as communications instruments. Lilić was also central in the first of these, Tomislav Ivčić's *Stop the war in Croatia*.

2.1.3 *Stop the war in Croatia, 1991*

Tomislav Ivčić, from Zadar in Dalmatia, was one of the most successful late-1980s Croatian 'zabavna' (light-entertainment) singers, a diaspora favourite with his songs about Dalmatian everyday life or emigration. He appeared to have incurred party suspicions of covert nationalism: *Večernji list* suggested in 1993 that the socialist authorities had not allowed him into Jugovizija, the Yugoslav Eurovision Song Contest selection, because his songs often mentioned religion or saints (Mikac 1993). One, *Pjesma Međugorja* (*Međugorje song*, 1987), concerned the controversial Marian apparition in a largely Croat area of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Yugoslav regime had been so distrustful of the 1981 apparitions that it imprisoned the local Franciscan friar and presented it as a fabrication by extreme (Croat) nationalists (Aleksov 2004:3–7). The Croatian Communists' eleventh-hour reorientation in late 1990 and HDZ's May 1991 election victory allowed much more openness for what *Globus*'s television supplement called 'musical patriotism' (Pribić 1991c).

STWIC, like other English-language wartime songs, was intended to convey the war's 'reality' to a poorly-informed or misinformed international audience. With its western-European piano arrangement and lyrics emphasising 'we want democracy and peace', Svanibor Pettan (1998:24) considered it paradigmatic of 'official' wartime music. Lilić had apparently encouraged Ivčić to 'do something to stop the war with a song' while at a restaurant late at night on 4/5 August – the same way that he and his team had invented *ZS* (Naprtá 1992a). The *Slobodni tjednik* editor Marinko Božić remembered the song being entirely written by 3:10 am. The team went straight to HTV and began recording before 11 am; post-production finished the next day and the video was ready on 12 August. Božić described it as expressing the wish for peace of:

Everyone except those who have attempted to deceive [prevariti] history with the politics of force and blood... Milošević and the Četniks are trying to extort the impossible with snipers, but the Croats, good and honest as ever, do not wish to respond the same way. As weapons they have taken song. (Ostoja 1991c)

⁵⁷ The head of Croatian Radio, Eva Sedak, could also influence lyrics: Nano Prša said she had asked for a line in his *Mi sokolovi koji nemamo krila* (*We falcons without wings*) to read 'we'll defend the home' ('branit ćemo dom') not 'spremni smo za dom' ('we're ready for the home') (Fabijanec 1992), presumably to avoid resemblance to the Ustaša slogan 'za dom spremni'.

Božić's statement, like his editorial line, did not take account of the HDZ right wing's efforts to provoke conflict between Croats and Serbs (see Gagnon 2004:150). It did, however, reflect HTV's approach to narrating the war – as did the presentation of *STWIC*. The video included news footage (military aeroplanes; tanks; Croatian peace demonstrations; young Croatian soldiers; a famous shot (Žanić 1993:33–6) of a JNA tank crushing a red Fićo car in Osijek), stock photography of Croatian locations (Rovinj, Slavonia, Dubrovnik, islands, the Plitvice lakes), pictures of Brussels and EC flags when 'Europe' was mentioned, Ivčić at his piano surrounded by children, and a final shot of an artillery gun with flowers down its barrel.⁵⁸ Image selection reflected HTV's detailed attention to representing the war. An early cut had included some corpses, but apparently 'scenes of children [and] mothers crying' and 'the tragic expression' of fleeing refugees were judged to 'provoke more emotions' (Krulčić 1991).

By 1993, *STWIC* had sold 64,600 official copies, at the time making it the best-selling record in independent Croatia (Pukanić 1993d). It had also made an impact in Australia: according to one informant, a Croat-Australian,⁵⁹ one of the many ways people fundraised for Croatia was buying multiple copies of the Australian *STWIC* release, which reached no. 4 in (one) Australian chart (Pribić 1992). Nonetheless, the song lived longest in Croatia itself. 'Stop the war in Croatia' became a common slogan on posters, merchandise and children's drawings (Senjković 2002:33, 46). *Večernji list* arranged its 25 August crossword around it (in Croatian and English); its instrumental would have introduced Splitski festival 1991 (Tomeković 1991d); Tajči, a teenage star studying drama in New York, said she often wore 'Stop the war in Croatia' T-shirts (Križan 1992). It was still current enough in 2006, when I saw the humorous variation 'Stop the emo in Croatia' graffitied outside a shop in central Zagreb.

2.1.4 *Moja domovina*, 1991

HTV's other iconic project *Moja domovina* (*My homeland*), in September 1991,⁶⁰ assembled all but a handful of Croatia's active pop and rock professionals under the name 'Hrvatski Band Aid', with two well-known showbusiness producers (Zrinko Tutić, Rajko Dujmić) as

⁵⁸ One important Croatian wartime image, Vukovar's water-tower, was not present: in August Vukovar had not yet become the national symbol it would become under JNA siege (see Kardov 2007).

⁵⁹ See Dona Kolar-Panov's (1997) ethnography of a diaspora Croat community during the war. On Croat-American diaspora fundraising, see Djuric 2003; Carter 2007.

⁶⁰ An English-language version (*My Croatia, my home*) was also recorded (for second/third-generation emigrants?).

composer and lyricist.⁶¹ *Moja domovina* emphasised the beauty of Croatia, with ‘the strength of golden corn’ (‘snagu zlatnog žita’) and ‘sea-coloured eyes’ (‘oči boje mora’), and the righteousness of the Croatian cause, where there ‘is only one truth’ (‘ima samo jedna istina’). The line ‘I’ll come back, I have to come, this is my home’ (‘vratit ću se, moram doći, tu je moj dom’) suggested it also addressed Croats outside the homeland (Senjković and Dukić 2005:53). The video’s accompanying compilation was the first of many such Croatia Records releases, and the song was the centrepiece of a January 1992 concert celebrating Croatia’s international recognition.

Ivčić’s and Tutić’s examples helped inspire many more new patriotic songs that winter. Patriotic compositions could give one access to television airplay, compilation cassettes and fundraising concerts – the music industry’s only thriving segments at the time. Even more patriotic songs appeared at the end of albums which otherwise had nothing to do with the war (perhaps already in preparation). However, there was also symbolic significance in the Hrvatski Band Aid idea of assembling representatives of different generations and taste cultures (from the 1950s schlager singer Ivo Robić to Tajči and the punk rocker Davor Gobac) united in their love for Croatia. Tutić described it as ‘a musical symbol of the unification of Croatia’ (Vukšić 1992), but its message was read more negatively by Vesna Kesić (1991), who viewed it as meaning that a ‘pluralism’ which meant everyone saying the same thing was illusory. Miljenko Jergović (1991), meanwhile, interpreted the very fact of Gobac singing a Tutić song as ‘the end of the process of spiritual collectivisation’ and the beginning of the end for rock and roll.

MD also led to the centralisation of musical fundraising under the Croatian Music Aid agency, run by Tutić and the manager Vladimir Mihaljek. This brought order to a previously unregulated practice, and sought to maintain aesthetic standards while overseeing the destination of funds (Tomeković 1991e). The regulation of fundraising concerts paralleled the extension of state control over other formerly-anarchic activities, not least the incorporation of autonomous militias into the state army. Indeed, given several musicians’ public sympathies for HOS, one may speculate whether the two centralisations were actually connected: concert organisers handled lots of cash, and regulation reduced the risk of funds going somewhere undesirable. CMA itself retained its relationship with the state throughout the decade, organising entertainments at the annual Statehood Day parade and HDZ rallies (Maksimović 1998a).

⁶¹ The most notable absentee was Ivčić himself: the date seems to have clashed with his German fundraising tour.

Hrvatski Band Aid illustrates the idea of a social centre that underlies Durkheimian claims – like Tutić’s – of society holding together. Nick Couldry (2003:xi) argues that the mass media’s importance depends on a taken-for-granted myth that society *has* a centre and that the media stand in for it. *MD* and other performers-in-unity images literally restaged this myth. However, HBA should not be understood as simply a local counterpart to the original Band Aid, and one cannot just transfer ideas about musicians ‘being political’ (Street 2002:440) to ex-Yugoslavia: for one thing, HBA (unlike the original) was directly state-backed. The Yugoslav system where Croatian music and media professionals had worked was one where the spheres of politics and entertainment had been intrinsically woven together (Vuletić 2007). Although the referent had changed from socialist Yugoslavia to independent and democratic Croatia, the structure of music in service to the state had not appreciably altered.

Band-aids remained a state propaganda instrument after the initial war effort. An ‘Istria Band Aid’, also Tutić-organised, appeared in a 1993 HDZ campaign (3.2.2), another band-aid marked the 1994 papal visit,⁶² and yet another was formed in 1996 for the *Za djecu Hrvatske* (For Croatia’s children) campaign of Tuđman’s wife. This last consisted predominantly of singers who worked with Tutić; *Nacional* argued he had used it to exclude rival camps (pop-tamburica singers and another manager’s clients) from participation and royalties (Maksimović 1996c). Yet perhaps the most grandiose propaganda band-aid did not materialise. An information ministry document by Vinko Grubišić leaked to *Slobodni tjednik* in 1992 proposed a strategy for persuading refugees to go home to formerly-occupied territory. Besides a list of symbols (biblical metaphors; phoenixes; home/family; movement; the seasons; the dead) for propaganda, it recommended ‘big themed programmes and a “live aid” concert’ (if not domestic and international ones) to celebrate Croatia finding ‘her way into the future and her place among the countries of the free world’ (Popovic and Wruss 1992). While the liberation of Knin could be celebrated in 1995 (with no mention of the effects on Serb civilians), Croat refugees could not go home to eastern Slavonia until 1998 when UNTAES expired, and Croatian territory could not be symbolically reintegrated. A vestige of the Grubišić plan, the *Sve hrvatske pobjede za Vukovar* (All the Croatian victories for Vukovar) campaign (including a compilation of wartime songs), accompanied HDZ’s 1997 election campaign (2.4.2) – but was undermined when UNTAES extended its mandate into January 1998.

⁶² Their song, *Hvala ti, sveti Oče* (*Thank you, holy Father*), inadvertently realised one writer’s satirical response to the little-liked *Danke Deutschland* – that either ‘Hvala, sveti Oče’ or a ganga band-aid would probably be next (Matišić 1992).

The congruence of band-aids and HTV music projects with state ideology is evident in their resemblance to the Lilić–Marčinko war-reporting guidelines. The overlap was not exact: *STWIC*'s video included people crying, which the guidelines warned against, although *MD*'s featured ruined buildings instead. However, analysing the body of wartime songs shows broad thematic similarities to HTV's narrative. The wounded were downplayed but death was framed as sacrifice for the homeland; mentioning 'Četniks' tended to impede access to state television and radio; most importantly, the songs teleologically implied that the rightful Croatian cause would prevail despite the terrible pain currently inflicted on the nation. As Ivo Žanić (2007:15) observes, purely structural accounts of the wartime media fail to account for the 'symbolic meaning' conveyed through their texts. The content of wartime patriotic songs thus deserves further consideration.

2.2 Themes in wartime music

2.2.1 The nation and its enemies

One strand of wartime popular music narrated the causes and course of the war. Typically these songs have received the most academic attention, particularly Jura Stublić's *E, moj druže beogradski* (*Oh, my Belgrade mate*), which appears in six discussions of everyday life or music during the Homeland War (Prica 1993:51; Senjković 1993:42–3; Pavlović 1999:144; Ceribašić 2000:229; Rasmussen 2002:197; Senjković and Dukić 2005:53). This was the war's best-exposed rock song, and drew on Stublić's own persona as a musician on the 'new wave' scene, which had seemed to stand for 'a pan-Yugoslav sensibility' (Gagnon 2004:41) among youth. Stublić addressed his song to a 'Belgrade mate' with whom he had courted girls in Belgrade and Novi Sad and sung each other's ethnic songs. Now, however, 'villages are burning across Slavonia' ('Slavonijom sela gore') and sea access had been cut off. Stublić imagined meeting his friend by the Sava river, where 'you won't recognise me, and you'll shoot at me' ('ti me nećeš prepoznati pa ćeš me zapucati'). Stublić would fire back, pray to miss, shoot his friend and mourn his loss.

The song drew directly on Stublić's pre-war friendship with Serbian new-wave bands, particularly Idoli: after concerts they had sometimes played Serb and Croat songs to each other. *EMDB* was unusual in Homeland War music for individualising the enemy – although even then Belgrade rather than Zagreb had fired the first shot. It could also be read as an expression of the 'collectivity of war' (Jeffords 1989:57–8) in veterans' narratives,

where opposing soldiers are nonetheless united in comparison to women and non-combatants. Several songs on Stublić's 1991 album *Hrana za golubove* (*Dove food*) directly or obliquely mentioned the war from an imagined absent soldier's viewpoint, including his follow-up single *Bili cvitak* (*White flower*) about a soldier consoling his girlfriend: if he died she should look forward to victory and freedom, and lay a white flower at Kijevo and Kruševo (two Croatian front-line villages) in his memory. Serving members of Zadar's 112 Brigade acted in the video, which won an award on HTV's chart-show *Hit depo* for the best video of 1992. Stublić's two singles shared a depiction of Croats as agents of peace, gendered into brave men and tender women.

The other typical representation of soldiers described their fearlessness and power as a collective. Several such songs – *Hrvatine* (2.1.2), Ivo Fabijan's *Kreni Gardo* (*Forward, Guard*), or Mladen Kvesić's *Mi smo garda hrvatska* (*We're the Croatian guard*) – were arranged like military marches, with bugles and snare-drums. *Hrvatine*'s composer, Mario Mihaljević, later explained he had wanted to avoid it sounding like 'a JNA marching-song' and so instructed his 17-year-old son Branimir to make it sound American (Kruhac 2001b). *Mi smo garda hrvatska* incorporated a musical phrase from the US *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, and an anthologised 1st Guards Brigade cadence known as *Srusit ćemo JNA* (*We'll bring down the JNA*) used the same tune as the US Marines. Two of these, *Hrvatine* and *Kreni Gardo*, caused controversy because of their description of the enemy and were dropped from national airplay after a few weeks. The issue with *KG* was the line 'stamp out the band' ('gasi bandu') (Senjković and Dukić 2005:53), while *Hrvatine* told the 'beasts of evil' ('zvijeri zle') to flee before the 'super-Croats' arrived.

Hrvatine also contained potential connections to HSP's positive view of Ustašism and the Independent State of Croatia (NDH): Croatian volunteers were 'rising up' for freedom ('dobrovoljci hrvatski za slobodu ustali'), and the last line mentioned the dawn of 'our independent Croatia' ('neovisna nam Hrvatska').⁶³ Although some nationalists viewed the NDH as a legitimate precursor to Croatian statehood, the state itself was conscious that a close association with the NDH might tip international opinion against Croatia (Irvine 1997:35).⁶⁴ *Hrvatine*'s references to fighting 'our Independent Croatia' and fighting 'for freedom and the Home' ('za slobodu i za Dom') thus looked dubious, especially since Mihaljević's marketing work for HSP may have made editors think they were intentional.

⁶³ NDH: 'Nezavisna Država Hrvatska'.

⁶⁴ The extent of Tuđman's own sympathies for the NDH is disputed. Bellamy (2003:71) implies that Tuđman personally welcomed its rehabilitation, but Gordana Uzelac (2006:216) argues that Tuđman denied it legitimate statehood by claiming that *his* state had been the first to restore Croatia's independence after 900 years.

A smaller group of songs including Hrvoje Hegedušić's *Barikade* (*Barricades*) and Mišo Kovač's *Grobovi im nikad oprostiti neće* (*The graves will never forgive them*) described the breakdown of Croat–Serb ethnic relations. *Barikade* alluded to the Croatian Serb rebels' roadblocks in August 1990 with a conciliatory, progressive narrator and a hate-filled, backward addressee: 'I wanted to sing about my Europe, freedom and the new spring', but his interlocutor responded 'as if [...] in some far-off century'⁶⁵ – as per Tuđman's civilisational narrative of the war (cultured Croats vs. barbaric Serbs) (see Bellamy 2003:68–9). Kovač said *Grobovi* was 'an open letter' to the JNA written 'when I saw the massacred Croatian civilians in Banija' during the occupation of Slavonia (Tomić 1992), and was perhaps the most graphic mainstream musical depiction of the war. Where once there had been an olive-branch 'as a symbol of peace from my birthplace' ('kao simbol mira iz mog rodnog kraja'), the 'lifetime image of my region' ('životna [...] slika moga zavičaja') had become children's anguish. The graves 'where sad mothers kiss dead lips' ('gdje žalosne majke mrtve usne ljube') would never forgive the aggressors, and the Croats would never forget the graves. Kovač's song invoked the same 'morbid geopolitics' (Čolović 2002:27) which were operating in both Croatian and Serbian nationalist narratives to claim all co-nationals' gravesites as Croatian/Serbian territory (Verdery 1999:98).

2.2.2 Religion

Religion not only depicted the Croats as a chosen people, but marked them as distinct from Orthodox Serbs and Muslim Bosniaks. This was usually implicit, although *Hrvatine* said that 'sacred things are with us, accursed things are with them' ('uza nas su svetinje, a s njima su prokletinje') (Senjković 2002:226): the 'sacred things', according to Čaić's video, were a rosary and two images of the Madonna (Senjković 2002:169). The most prominent wartime song about God was Đani Maršan's *Bože, čuvaj Hrvatsku* (*God save Croatia*), asking God to bless the land and pledging that God could 'take the life from me and give it to her' if necessary ('ako treba, Gospode, evo primi zavjet moj/uzmi život od mene, pa ga podaj njoj'). The song became HDZ's 1992 election anthem, superseding 1990's *Hrvatska budnica* (*Croatian patriotic-song*) performed and written by Maršan's brother Tomislav Ivčić. It remained in party and state service throughout the decade: it accompanied HDZ's 1995 election video where Tuđman was the climax of a book of great historical Croats (Senjković 2002:89–90), and five klapas sang it to the Pope on another visit to Croatia (Tomašević 1997).

⁶⁵ 'Htio sam da zapjevam o moj Europi, o slobodu i o novom proljeću'; 'kao da si u nekom davnom stoljeću'.

Religion was depicted in less detail as a source of strength in many other songs. ‘God is on our side’ (‘Bog je na našoj strani’) in *Mi smo garda hrvatska*, ‘victory is ours and God is with us’ (‘pobjeda je naša i Bog je uz nas’) in *Obrišimo suze* (*Let’s dry our tears*) by the children’s choir Zvijezdice, and the guardsman’s fiancée in Sanja Trumbić’s *Moj je dragi u Narodnoj gardi* (*My boyfriend’s in the National Guard*) ‘pray[ed] to God for him to come back’ (‘ja molim Boga da se vrati’). *Hrvatine*, as usual, struck a slightly discordant note, describing the Croatian homeland as ‘both God’s and Allah’s’ (‘i od Boga i Alaha’). In August 1994, Čaić explained he had used the line because:

we’re actually one people [...] That’s the wealth of the Croatian people: different confessions and dialects. [...] I thought of Croatia in its historical borders. And that’s the state from both God and Allah (Cigoj 1994a).

‘Historical borders’ extending over Bosnian territory, and allowing for both Catholic and Muslim Croats, reflected HSP ideology rather than the state position (see Irvine 1997:37–8).

2.2.3 Territory

The extent of territory in *Hrvatine* was unusual, but the theme itself was not – as might be expected in a war which many Croats experienced through the trauma of occupation and displacement. Songs were produced, often by local musicians, not just for the central symbolic sites of Vukovar and Dubrovnik but others such as Šibenik (*Krešimirov grade hrvatski – O, Krešimir’s Croatian city*), Osijek (*Moj Osijek – My Osijek*) and even Rijeka (*Bedem ljubavi – Rampart of love*), which was not directly affected by the war but received refugees from occupied regions.⁶⁶ Stublić deliberately dedicated *Bili cvitak* to the much smaller settlements of Kijevo and Kruševo as symbols for ‘all the smaller places where Croatia was being defended’ (Cigoj 1995a), and Josipa Lisac and Guido Mineo referenced eight towns across Croatia (Šibenik, Varaždin, Osijek, Vinkovci, Sisak, Petrinja, Gospić and Vukovar) in *Sloboda i mir* (*Freedom and peace*). The increased focus on Vukovar after its fall in November 1991 perpetuated the production of Vukovar songs into 1998, when Croatia finally regained sovereignty over eastern Slavonia (2.4.2).

The stabilisation of the front with a third of Croatian territory under Serb occupation made displacement an ongoing social reality – as expressed in the war’s last musical phenomenon, Miroslav Škoro’s *Ne dirajte mi ravnicu* (*Hands off my plains*). *Ravnica*, recorded both by Škoro and by Zlatni dukati, became ‘a symbol of protest and resistance’ for both

⁶⁶ Bedem ljubavi: a patriotic women’s organisation supporting refugees.

émigrés and refugees, especially those from the Slavonian plains it described (Bonifačić 1998:146). Many refugees saw Škoro's nostalgia for his fields, tamburica and mother, and his vow 'hands off my plains, because I'll come back' ('ne dirajte mi ravnicu, jer ja ću se vratiti') as expressing their own longing for home (March 2003:175). Like *Stop the war in Croatia*, it benefited from journalistic sloganeering, e.g. *Večernji list* said a Đakovo folklore festival 'mean[t] to the Slavonians the confirmation of [their] centuries-long existence. So, hands off our plains' (Kučinić 1993). At a 1996 HDZ election rally during the UNTAES administration of eastern Slavonia, which was delaying Tuđman's ambition to reintegrate Croatia, *Ravnica* was the last song performed before the finale of *Bože, čuvaj Hrvatsku* (Grubišić 1996).

Ravnica's wartime relevance was reinforced by a video with Škoro performing it around an army campfire, while Dukati's video contrasted images of wartime Slavonia with shots from Branko Schmidt's film *Sokol ga nije volio* (*Sokol didn't love him*) to represent pre-war rural life before the war. Editors and event-organisers contextualised its simple narrative, with no place-names or ethnic-identifiers, into the narrative of collective displacement which would be overcome. It might therefore seem surprising that Škoro had actually recorded it *before* the war as *Ja ću se vratiti*, then a typical song about emigrants' nostalgia. Vlado Smiljanić at Croatia Records had found the demo tape while preparing a patriotic tamburica compilation to follow *Moja domovina*; Dukati had re-recorded it; Škoro then recorded his own version after coming back to Croatia in 1992 (Pukanić 1993c).⁶⁷ However, the recontextualisation shows how wartime popular music used existing codes of communication about individuals' relationship to place and transferred them to the nationalised level of the homeland (Baker, forthcoming (b)).

2.2.4 Gender

The national community, united through faith and territory, was nonetheless divided by gender – perhaps the best-researched aspect of wartime popular music in Croatia. Indeed, the 1990s state was characterised by a 'problematic of family, gender and Nation' (Pavlović 1999:133) which celebrated women as mothers and men as soldiers and providers (see Mostov 2000). As Reana Senjković points out (2002:165), this reflected the classic rhetorical construction of women as peaceful and innocent Others to the masculine soldier

⁶⁷ This was the most common account. Once, however, Škoro presented it as written in Maryland 'when you realise they're pulling down your house and city (I don't need to say how much I love Osijek!) and you're far away, unable to do anything to [get] together with the guys from your street and pick something up to defend your hearth, street and farm [ognjišta, šora i salaša]. You get angry at yourself. You want to help. How?' (Šagovac 1992).

(Elshtain 1995:4). Naila Ceribašić (2000) situates most constructions of gender in wartime popular music within this framework, although does not show how far popular music was integrated into the state media structure. One of the richest examples (although Ceribašić does not include it) was Doris Dragović's *Dajem ti srce, zemljo moja* (*My country, I give you my heart*), which described a mother's relationship to the homeland through giving birth.

This mother had borne the country 'a son, just like mothers have borne for you since antiquity' ('rodila sam tebi sina, isto k'o što od davnine/rađale su majke za tebe'); when he grew up she would tell him 'this is your country and your home, [with] blue sea, olive-groves, golden wheat on the plains' ('to je tvoja zemlja i tvoj dom/modro more, maslenici, zlatno klasje u ravnici'). The song went on to depict a cyclical scene of the mother kissing a rosary while 'our old people [went] on their way', church bells rang and 'new children are playing who will stay here after us',⁶⁸ and indeed the community's cyclical nature was reinforced by repeating the first verse as the last. Interestingly, these lyrics were written (as a commission) by Zlatan Stipišić-Gibonni, whose own music has often drawn on ideas of traditional Dalmatian life. Gibonni was not a committed supporter of state ideology (he supported HSLs in the 1999 elections), but the song still has something in common with his own singer-songwriter work insofar as it roots tradition in everyday life not mythology or great figures.

DTS took extra force from Dragović's own maternal identity (the video included images of her family playing outdoors): just as Gibonni had intended, since he thought 'the most patriotic idea for her was that she had had a son' (Tomić 1994). This was one of many instances where images of mothers were conflated with 'a personification of the Homeland' (Senjković and Dukić 2005:47). However, wartime showbusiness covered all sections of the family, including children: Magazin's *Mir, mir do neba* (*Peace until heaven*) urged children not to fear noises or nightmares, Đorđe Novković wrote *Halo tati* (*Hello daddy*) about a child sending his/her guardsman father a teddy bear to comfort him, and HTV organised a band-aid song *Kad bi svi* (*If only everyone*) for a charity appeal for children. Songs about fatherhood were fewer, but Jasmin Stavros's *Za djecu djece naše djece* (*For the children of our children's children*) might have completed the circle with a front-line soldier's pledge to 'sleep forever if necessary [...] for the children of our children's children' ('zaspat ću zauvijek ako treba [...] za djecu djece naše djece'). These images helped naturalise a nationalised concept of gender where 'women physically reproduce the nation, and men

⁶⁸ 'Usne moje krunice dok mole, naši stari odlaze na put/dok sad crkve zvona zvone, igraju se djeca nova što za nama ostati će tu'.

protect and avenge it' (Mostov 2000:89) and a gendered structure of sentiment (see Verdery 1996a:78) towards the nation.

Aspects of performance could themselves assist an essentialised representation of gender: Ceribašić (2000:231) noted that men tended to explain rationally while women engaged in emotional pleading and prayer, as with the male and female vocals on ET's *Molitva za mir*. Here a male rapper explained why peace was necessary 'for all peoples and Croatia, I fight for democracy with a pen' ('za sve narode i Kroaciju/ja borim se perom za demokraciju') and a female singer 'raise[d] [her] voice for peace' ('za mir ja dižem svoj glas'). There were occasional exceptions, such as an album of hymns by the (blind) male singer Tomislav Brajša; however, women were more likely to be 'expository' than men purely 'emotional'. Female expositions included the tamburica vocalist Vera Svoboda's songs about Slavonia and Vukovar, the all-female 'sweet-metal' band Maxmett's *Ova je moja zemlja* (*This is my country*) (the narrator heard guns and 'our boys' fighting and fearlessly said she would go with them 'if I just had a rifle' ('da bar neku pušku imam')), and Meri Cetinić's *Zemlja dide mog* (*My granddad's country*). Cetinić's narrator remembered her grandfather telling her about 'people not like us' ('nisu oni ka i mi'), so that 'the day comes when a person well-known to me wants to take' the land ('i tako dođe dan da mi čovik dobro znan hoće uzet nju'), but 'we' would not let go of it ('al' mi je ne damo') – even though 'she is beautiful like a dear girl and everybody wants her' ('a ona je prilipa ka draga divojka i svatko želi nju').

2.2.5 National history

Popular music, like the presidential war narrative, often strove to relate the present conflict to the national past and to interpret past events as precedents for the present. This held true not only for the gusle singers like Mile Krajina discussed by Ivo Žanić (2007:168–9; see also Senjković and Dukić 2005:50–1), who sees gusle music as a parallel journalistic system which interacted with print (Žanić 2007:45) – much like the 'new Serbian folk songs' analysed by Ivan Čolović (2002). Mainstream showbusiness, and especially singers specialising in the Ivčić/Kovač model of regional songs, also produced musical texts about history. The most detailed historical narrative was Dražen Žanko's *Od stoljeća sedmog* (*Since the 7th century*), which presented the Croat experience as a teleology of persecution and righteous sacrifice to safeguard a continuous national history.⁶⁹ Some unnamed adversaries had gleefully hoped to force the Croats into emigration and dilute their culture and

⁶⁹ Its lyricist, Ivo Cvitić (1996), said it showed how 'we're still here despite all the efforts to stop us being here where we've been struggling for survival for 13 centuries'.

language to be able to say that ‘they [the Croats] weren’t even there’ (‘nisu tu ni bili, tad će reći svima’). However, history was indelible when written ‘on a hard stone’ (‘na tvrdoj stini’), and ‘everyone must know we’ve been here a long time’ (‘mi smo tu odavno, svi moraju znati’). The Croats’ honourable record of defending their homes was also mentioned, in a lyric originally written in July 1990 (Cvitić 1996) before the escalation of the Serb–Croat conflict.⁷⁰

In narrative terms, Žanko (or Cvitić) had much in common with Tuđman, who himself used the 7th-century motif when speaking before the UN to mark Croatia’s accession (Arenas 1992). They shared a view of national history as a series of struggles which would shortly pay off in realising Croatia’s dream of freedom, and saw language and historical knowledge as integral to Croatian identity. Zlatko Gall (1998b) later described OSS as ‘proof of the erasure of borders between national myths, folklore, showbusiness and high politics’, and it remained useful in high politics after the war. It was the opening number at the Knin liberation concert (Milčec 1995), and when HTV controversially broadcast Jakov Sedlar’s Bleiburg film *Četverored* on election silence day, the OSS video followed immediately and without explanation (Starčević 1999).

Đani Maršan demonstrated a complementary approach to history on *Hrvatski mornari* (Croatian sailors), dedicated to the navy, which mixed folkloric metaphors and historical comparisons to describe their fearlessness – a common wartime representational strategy in both Serbia and Croatia (Čolović 1994:108–9). The sailors were ‘tender as foam, firm as a stone/the sons of beauty, love and strength’ (‘nježni kao pjena, čvrsti kao stijena/sinovi ljepote, ljubavi i snage’), but also counterparts to the medieval king Krešimir (1058–74) and the 16th-century Uskok privateers: ‘with the boiling blood of the Neretva and Senj [...] God bless Krešimir’s boats, God bless the Uskok sailors’ (‘uzavrele krvi Neretve i Senja [...] blagoslovi, Bože, Krešimira lađe, blagoslovi, Bože, uskoka mornara’). Krešimir’s unification of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia was an important point in the nationalist narrative of Croatian statehood (Bellamy 2003:36), and the Uskoks had been retrospectively interpreted as Croatian national heroes for fighting the Venetians and Turks (Bracewell 1992:7).

The idea of the Homeland War reactivating a ‘heroic codex’ on the plains, coasts and highlands was important in state propaganda (Rihtman-Augustin 2000:178), and

⁷⁰ ‘Kroz vrimena gruba i kroz ljute boje/branili smo časno mi ognjište svoje’: ‘Through rough times and through angry battles/we defended our hearths with honour’. Cvitić (1996) had written it as a poem for a patriotic rally in Kaštel Gomilica. Žanko later set it to music for Splitski festival 1991 (cancelled due to fierce fighting). It was apparently played 11 times in a row on one Radio Split request-show in August 1991.

contributed to the past–present elision. However, it drew on existing patriotic thought rather than creating new imagery: in 1897, for instance, Ante Trešić Pavičić (1965:8–9) had described the Adriatic as ‘the strongest bulwark of our freedom, without which in today’s circumstances we would have vanished from the face of the earth’ and a source of strength for a possibly-glorious future like the past ‘in the time of king Tomislav, when 200 Croatian warships sailed it’. Past–present elision can show ‘the men of the present’ to be as capable as ‘their ancestors’ in the task at hand (Breuilly 1992:67) (in this case defending Croatia’s independence), but could also reinscribe the present with the values of the past. This latter aspect would become important in post-war patriotic music which associated Croatian generals, indicted for war crimes, with less dubious historical heroes (4.4).

However, one historical moment which rarely appeared in wartime popular music – apart from one Mišo Kovač song in 1993 – was the Bleiburg massacre of Croatian Ustaša and Domobran soldiers (and Serb and Slovene collaborators) by the Partisans, which revisionist Croatian historians interpreted as a national tragedy inflicted by genocidal Serbs (MacDonald 2002:174). This was unlike the pre-war situation, when Duka Čaić and Ivo Fabijan had both included songs about Bleiburg on their last pre-war albums. Čaić’s *Križni put* (*Way of the cross*), using the name for the soldiers’ forced march, told the story of a man whose brother had died on the march but whose mother was too afraid to tell him what the ‘way of the cross’ had been. Fabijan’s *Proljeće u Bleiburgu* (*Spring in Bleiburg*) must have been released before June 1991, when its lyrics were printed in a TV magazine (Pribić 1991c). It imagined a visit to Bleiburg field where ‘a people died, Croats fell’ (‘ovdje je umir’o narod, ovdje su pali Hrvati’), saw a vision of ‘white skeletons coming out of the open land’ (‘iz otvorene zemlje izlaze kosturi bijeli’) and heard the voice of ‘my father the Domobran’ (‘mog oca domobrana’) warning against war.⁷¹

Čaić too used the resurrection image in his album’s title track, *Hrvatsko proljeće 1990* (*Croatian Spring 1990*), celebrating Croatia’s freedom from socialism. The narrator offered his hand to the homeland to ‘take the crown of thorns from [your] martyr’s head’ (‘da skinu krunu trnja s mučeničke glave’) and replace it with a ‘wreath of eternal glory’ (‘vijencem vječne slave’). Eventually brother would find brother around the world – i.e. Croats returning from emigration – and ‘the dead will waken’ (‘probudit će se mrtvi’). Čaić and Fabijan had ambiguous status within the music industry. Both had recording contracts, making them more ‘official’ than some musicians who appeared on ‘underground’ wartime

⁷¹ Photographs of excavated mass graves had begun to appear in the media in the late 1980s, amplifying a sensationalist reinterpretation of Second World War massacres as part of a continuous genocide campaign (Dragović-Soso 2002:113).

patriotic compilations (2.2.6), but the *Kreni Gardo* and *Hrvatine* incidents exposed the limits of acceptability. Avoiding Bleiburg or Second World War themes in mainstream patriotic music could be seen as an example of the ‘ethnic underbidding’ described by VP Gagnon (2004:46), where the parties in power strove to appear less nationalist than their alternatives on the right. It may also reflect the increasing importance of popular music to the state once war had broken out and the state media were viewing it as a communication instrument – requiring more attention to potentially unwelcome connotations.

Michael Billig (1991:41–2) has argued that the amount of historical (especially medieval) references in 1990s Croatia represented an attempt to embed historical legitimaton into everyday social practices such as the use of money. The legitimisation project aimed to prove the continuity of Croatian statehood as a justification for statehood in the present day, and – in presidential service – to place Tuđman at the climax of a line of great Croatian statesmen (Senjković 2002:89). From a ‘banal nationalism’ perspective, songs such as *OSS* or *Hrvatski mornari* certainly contributed to this atmosphere. However, popular music might be seen in a different light through Gagnon’s argument (2004:xv) that wartime ideological projects in Croatia and Serbia mattered less for their content than for their capacity to ‘demobilize’ potential challengers to existing elites. From this viewpoint, HTV’s and CR’s stimulation of wartime popular music mattered because it closed down the space for any other interest groups to articulate competing narratives of the war or the nation through music rather than because it articulated the state narrative itself.

One possible counter-narrative which might have continued to celebrate the democratic achievements of 1990–91 rather than wartime sacrifice – e.g. the rock band Parni Valjak’s song *Kekec je slobodan, red je na nas* (*Kekec is free, it’s our turn*) about political change in Slovenia and Croatia – did not survive the initial ‘anarchic’ period of wartime production, and rock bands generally avoided the topic until the late 1990s (3.3.3). The exceptions were Prljavo Kazalište and Jura Stublić. Kazalište’s 1989 song *Ruža hrvatska* (*Croatian rose*) had placed them among the first musicians to openly deal with the national theme: their 1993 album *Lupi petama i reci sve za Hrvatsku* (*Stamp your feet and say everything for Croatia*) also included a newly-composed tamburica song with a video about Slavonia at war.⁷² Stublić’s 1994 *Chicago* ironically described a singer’s co-option by gangsters using a call-and-response structure mocking Herzegovinan/Dinaric singing, commenting on the so-called ‘Herzegovinan lobby’ in Croatian politics (see Jansen 2005b; Sredl 2005). However, the

⁷² The song was caught up in a scandal over the use of tamburica by pop and rock composers (3.1.3). In 2006, the Imotski rapper Ante Cash recorded a track about disappointment with patriotic promises called *Lupio si petama* (*You stamped your feet*).

most serious counter-narrative – which celebrated the NDH as an expression of Croatian statehood and viewed Herzegovina as an integral part of Croatia – flourished on the musical black market and some local radio stations.

2.2.6 ‘Official’ and ‘alternative’ music

Svanibor Pettan’s account (1998:19) of popular music during the war divides songs into ‘official’ and ‘alternative’ repertoires through their relationship ‘to political power structures’, where ‘alternative’ songs had a more aggressive message and contained ‘Balkan’ as opposed to ‘European’ musical elements (any non-political ‘alternative’ is not considered). His paradigmatic examples of ‘official’ and ‘alternative’ are *Stop the war in Croatia* (2.1.3) and Thompson’s *Bojna Čavoglave* (*The Čavoglave platoon*, 2.3.3) (1998:25). Pettan’s classification supports the idea that popular music was one field where the presidential narrative clashed with the right-wing challenge. However, the ‘alternative’ is more difficult to define in practice: *Čavoglave* was positively mainstream compared to the even more violent and openly pro-Ustaša music circulated on pirate cassettes sold at market stalls and concerts. *Globus* and *Slobodni tjednik* both reported on this development (Pukanić 1992b; Mušćet 1992b), but *Večernji list* did not, perhaps because the state tabloid did not want to give it visibility.

The notorious *Sve ćemo prste slomit’, a ne samo tri* (*We’ll break all your fingers, not just three*) and *Karadžiću, majmune sa grane* (*Karadžić, monkey from a branch*) emerged through market stalls, as did Niko Bete’s *Hercegovci za dom spremni* (*Herzegovinans ready for the home*) which connected celebration of the Ustaša Crna legija (Black Legion) to a 500-year history of slavery (i.e. under the Ottomans) and the idea that Herzegovina was where ‘the fiercest Croatia’ (‘najžešća [...] Hrvatska’) could be found. However, a full account of wartime popular music also needs to consider media complicity in constructing and encouraging the underground. Boško Landeka, a bodyguard, ex-Torcida member and HOS paramilitary who had recorded *Sve ćemo prste slomit’* and openly called himself an Ustaša, appeared in *Globus* several times during 1993–1994 wearing or sitting on Ustaša logos.⁷³ A fascinated *Globus* called him ‘the real image of a Herzegovinan Sylvester Stallone from Tomislavgrad’ (Babić 1993), and gave him space to boast of disarming Serbs in Zagreb during 1991 and knowing the killers of the Zec family (Malnar 1994). Landeka certainly fit the profile of the glamorised ‘criminal hero’ (Čolović 2004b), a symptom of the cult of gangsterism and violence in wartime Croatia, Bosnia⁴ and Serbia.

⁷³ Torcida: organised Hajduk Split fans.

'Officialness', too, was more complicated than a strict official/alternative division suggests. Sanja Trumbić's *Danke Deutschland*, which thanked Germany for helping Croatia's international recognition, was musically 'official' and was shown on the HTV evening news the day before the recognition announcement. However, it was only ever played twice and seems never to have appeared on radio – perhaps because Serbian state television had used it to argue that the Croatian regime was fascist (Homovec 1992). Another song which received more attention than airplay was *Čekam te* (*I'm waiting for you*), several actresses' version of *Lili Marlene*: the addressee, typically, was a soldier, and the narrator looked forward to 'the pulled-down houses standing again and every child smiling' ('i srušene se kuće opet stajati, i svako će se dijete opet smijati') in a final verse extending the message to the nation (Lilly and Irvine 2002:120). So far, so official; however, this song too was quickly banned, reportedly by Antun Vrdoljak himself (Polimac 1992). This may again have represented sensitivity about the German link, but also suggests a need for caution in describing ideology as 'official'. Indeed, it demonstrates the room for contestation within the broadly hegemonic discourse of the war effort.

Even the most officially 'suitable' songs could take on unwanted meanings. Vladimir Kočiš-Zec's *Gospodine generale* (*Dear Mr General*) was a winner in HTV's tender, and was premiered on the evening news on 11 October 1991 (Vučić 1993). It warned a (JNA) general that the community would endure (represented by references to Zec taking his own son fishing again, children telling stories and meadows returning to green), and concluded 'remember Vukovar' ('zapamtite Vukovar'). Vukovar then was still withstanding the JNA siege and providing the Croatian state with a symbol of resistance, but fell in November 1991. While the state commemorated Vukovar as a site of mythical sacrifice, the right-wing opposition alleged Tuđman had allowed it to be captured by deliberately withholding resources from its defence, and the gossip remained pervasive. Kruno Kardov (2007:64) speculates that, since Vukovar's heroism had been extensively mythologised during the siege, conspiracy was 'the only acceptable answer' for its fall. In line with the conspiracy theory, there appear to have been rumours that *Gospodine generale* was actually dedicated to Tuđman (himself a former JNA general), which were common enough for Zec to refute them (Lacko 1995).

'Official' and 'alternative' should probably be regarded as a continuum, not poles. The different power-centres within and between institutions complicated 'officialness': HTV itself contained competing interests, and the Croatian Army and defence ministry must have supported or at least turned a blind eye to front-line music-making. The songs for

army units have typically not survived, even when recorded by stars as famous as Mišo Kovač (who sang the anthem of 113 Brigade from his hometown Šibenik); the exception is *Čavoglave*, which ended up incorporating its singer as an entertainment star (2.3.4). One underground figure, Dražen Zečić, combined military service and a repertoire including the Ustaša song *Evo zore, evo dana* (*Here comes dawn, here comes day*) with a parallel career performing pop-festival love ballads, subsequently becoming a major pop attraction (4.3.3). However, unlike Thompson, Zečić's previous positive attitude towards the NDH has not caused public controversy.

2.3 Stardom and the war

2.3.1 Narratives of trauma

All three iconic bodies in Croatian representations of the war – maternal, victimised and armed bodies (Žarkov 2007:13) – were accounted for in the entertainment star-system. Certain musicians were directly affected as individuals by the war – fatally in the case of the punk Satan Panonski, killed on active service near his native Vinkovci. Mišo Kovač lost his teenage son, an army volunteer, in 1992 when he apparently committed suicide on leave. Several others were forced to flee their homes when the JNA occupied Croatian territory. The best-known case involved Tereza Kesovija from Dubrovnik, whose Konavle house was burned down and ransacked by advancing Montenegrin units. Kesovija frequently discussed her experience, engaging in a level of political commentary rarely expressed by female singers: interviewed by *Globus* after Oluja, she rejected the idea that Serb civilians fleeing Krajina could be thought of as 'prognanici' (displaced persons), the label which had been applied to Croats in her own situation. Instead, she felt that 'they voluntarily left their homes at the behest of Serb politics,' a manipulative Serb attempt to 'besmirch Croatia in front of the world' (Cigoj 1995b).⁷⁴

Kesovija's personal narrative nonetheless fitted the official gendering of the war which accorded women the ideal roles of suffering mother, wife/girlfriend and refugee (see Pavlović 1999; Senjković 2002; Žarkov 2007). Media representations of the war tended to extrapolate individual suffering to a national level at the expense of individuality. Kesovija was thus immediately presented as 'one of the symbols of Dubrovnik and its culture'

⁷⁴ See also the ICTY testimony of Kesovija's regular composer, the Dubrovnik-born Đelo Jušić, whose recording of the siege contributed to the prosecution case in a war crimes trial against JNA officers: <http://www.un.org/icty/transe42/040224IT.htm> [accessed 16 June 2008].

(Tomeković 1991b), itself something on which the wartime state was anxious to capitalise internationally. She was also ascribed a privileged position to speak about the war.

Dubravka Ugrešić (1998:140) writes critically of Kesovija offering to beg on her knees to Tuđman to stop him surrendering Konavle to the Serbs and quickly receiving a reassuring letter from him. *Večernji list* promoted the association of personal trauma with the power to speak when it reported from a charity concert in Split:

When Tereza in the middle of her concert tells with tearful eyes the sad story of her burned-down cypress-trees in Konavle, those cypresses she planted with her own hands and whose growth she followed for decades, then that story and such an artist are simply – to be believed! (Relja 1992)

Another Dubrovnik singer, Milo Hrnić, supported Kesovija's identification with the damaged but resilient city. He too had lost property (his boat) in the attack, and mentioned acquaintances who had lost parents or children, concluding that 'co-existence' would never be possible for this generation and warning off Montenegrin holidaymakers (Jelinić 1995). However, Kesovija's privilege as victim was not universally accepted within the industry. After she had criticised Ivo Fabijan's *Kreni Gardo*, Fabijan responded by attacking her favour under the Yugoslav regime:

One of our singers earned [money] singing at Yugoslav embassies and consulates, and now with hysterical wailing is acting [the part of] a grieving Croat. The Četniks took her house, so let the Serb ambassadors in Dubrovnik help her now. And she even spat at my song. (Uzelac 1991c)

Mišo Kovač too had to deal with suddenly-unwelcome aspects of his Yugoslav-era public personas:⁷⁵ Kovač had given a 1989 interview criticising the destructive potential of nationalism and said he would leave the country if HDZ came to power (Luković 1989:244). *Grobovi* was supposed to leave no doubt about his loyalty:

How do you think there can be co-existence between a village like Škabrnja, a Croatian village where there was a massacre, and the neighbouring Serb village, Benkovac? I sang there, I know those people. They won't be able to forgive [the fact] that someone slaughtered their father, mother, brother and sister... That's also what the song 'Grobovi im nikad' is about. (Muzaferija 1991a)

Judging by an incident recorded by Dona Kolar-Panov (1997:147), not even *Grobovi* was enough to resolve the ambiguity: her Croat-Australian informants remarked during a video

⁷⁵ However, many pop musicians had had the occasional Yugoslav patriotic song in their repertoire: even Fabijan had performed in a patriotic evening at Zagrebfest 1984, although his song was solely about his birthplace with no mention of socialism/Tito.

about Šibenik at war (containing the song) that Kovač 'is one of them. He is an Orthodox... He is not a Catholic', and referred to Kovač's 1989 statement. Kovač's political alignment became even more confused after his son's death. He briefly associated himself with HSP, and his 1993 Bleiburg song would once have been considered extremist revisionism from a singer who had once refused to perform at a Croatian hall in Canada because of a picture of Ante Pavelić above the stage (Pogutz 1993).

2.3.2 Military service

The heroic soldier, like the stoic civilian victim, was another ideal type in the official representation of the war (Senjković 2002:198). Musicians from various genres volunteered to fight, including Prljavo Kazalište's guitarist Damir Lipovšek-Keks (Uzelac 1991b), the tamburica group Agrameri (3.1.1), and Branko Mijić from Gracia, who shot down two enemy aircraft with a rocket-launcher (Marušić 1992). Apparently the only female singer on active service was Ivanka Luetić, who complained that some singers just wore uniforms for quick troop visits whereas she had spent eight months in an active unit on the front line (Mušćet 1992a). As in many areas of public life, the initial anarchy was centralised during autumn 1991 and musicians were channelled into an 'artists' company' proposed by Hrvoje Hitrec. Meanwhile, Zlatni dukati were prevented from volunteering because (related their leader Josip Ivanković) 'they can contribute more to the Croatian cause with Croatian songs' (Uzelac 1991a; also in Bonifačić 1998). Tying up musicians (and sportsmen) at the front detracted from the dominant concept of propaganda, in which celebrities' campaigning role excused the absence of a potential soldier.

The presence of uniformed soldiers in everyday life amounted to what Tanja Thomas and Fabian Virchow (2005) have termed 'banal militarism', by analogy with 'banal nationalism'. Besides the sudden stardom of Thompson, a serving soldier who wrote his first hit at the front, militarisation infected popular music even after the front stabilised and HTV had no use for communicative programmes like *Za slobodu* or *Gardijada*. At MHJ 1993, Ksenija Urličić read out soldiers' telegrams before Dražen Zečić (a soldier himself) performed, and dozens of uniformed soldiers had been given tickets for the live audience. Zečić, coincidentally or not, won the festival's audience award (Cigoj 1999a).⁷⁶ Musicians who remained civilians also supported dominant representations of soldiers. Doris Dragović spoke approvingly of a rosary given to her at a troops' concert near Petrinja,

⁷⁶ In 1999, *Globus* published internal army documents complaining that Zečić's commanding officer had done nothing about Zečić's absenteeism or his performing 'an Ustaša song at his concerts [...] which is very damaging to the Rep[ublic] of Croatia because of the international public' (Cigoj 1999a). On Zečić and Ustašism, see 4.3.3.

which symbolised ‘the faith and love the rosary represents, all the war experience, bullets, shells, blood, sweat and pain’ (Mušćet 1992c).

More importantly, stars could support and help naturalise the presidential discourse about war crimes in their public statements – such as Tereza Kesovija on Serb civilians (2.3.1). Kesovija also spoke out against ICTY indictments of two Bosnian Croats, Ivica Rajić and Dario Kordić, when ‘the real criminals, like Radovan Karadžić, Ratko Mladić, Željko Ražnatović-Arkan, Biljana Plavšić and many others, are moving around freely’ (Pišek 1997),⁷⁷ but the lengthiest discussion of Croat responsibility came from Jasenko Houra, who was asked after Oluja whether he agreed with the former chief justice Milan Vuković that Croats could not have committed war crimes in a defensive war. Houra saw ‘[e]verything the Church allows’ as permissible, so that it was:

ethical to defend one’s house and one’s family [...] Someone could have lost their nerves and fired at the wrong moment, but in general, Croats cannot be accused of war crimes. (Butković 1995)

Ultimately, he privileged victims’ rights to make moral judgements: ‘I don’t want to pass judgement on the acts of people on whom 5,000 shells fell’, who had lost loved ones or witnessed the massacre in occupied Dalj (Butković 1995). Houra increasingly disagreed with HDZ on economic matters, but aligned himself with the ‘state-building option’ of 1990–91 (Tigerman 1995).

2.3.3 *Bojna Čavoglave, 1992*

The phenomenon of Marko Perković Thompson’s *Bojna Čavoglave* (*Čavoglave battalion*) was one of the war’s most notable musical events. Perković, a volunteer from Čavoglave in Dalmatinska zagora (nicknamed ‘Thompson’ after his rifle), became a star on local radio and then across Croatia in 1992. After writing *Čavoglave* at the front he distributed a demo tape around Split bars while on leave. Two *Feral tribune* journalists (Boris Dežulović and Predrag Lucić) took it to Radio Split, which first played it on Christmas Day 1991. It won Radio Split’s contest for the most popular patriotic song two weeks later (Ivanišević 1992), the local TV Marjan filmed a video which found its way to HTV over the next two months, and two Split newspapers widely read outside Dalmatia (*Slobodna Dalmacija* and *Nedjeljna Dalmacija*) raised country-wide awareness of the song. Posters, lyrics and eventually interviews with Thompson himself soon followed in the national press, and by June he had signed to Zdenko Runjić’s Skalinada label. *Čavoglave*’s representation of the war was more

⁷⁷ Karadžić: president of Republika Srpska; Plavšić: RS vice-president; Mladić: RS military commander; Arkan: commander of Serb paramilitaries in Croatia and Bosnia.

explicit than previous state-sanctioned hits, and revived the tensions manifested during the *Hrvatine* controversy, eventually incorporating far-right connotations into the musical memory of the war.

Čavoglave's uncompromising message and uncharacteristic musical arrangement distinguished it from previous patriotic hits, and Thompson's biography backed up his music with off-stage authenticity. The song portrayed Thompson and his comrades standing at the source of the river Čikola (a local landmark) to defend 'our homes' ('U Zagori na izvoru rijeke Čikole/stala braća da obrane naše domove') and freedom to the death. To the 'Serb volunteers, gang and Četniks' who wanted to take the village, he promised 'our hand will even reach you in Serbia' ('Čujte srpski dobrovoljci, bando, četnici/stići će vas naša ruka i u Srbiji'). To the 'Croats, dear brothers from Čavoglave,' he vowed that 'Croatia will never forget you' ('Oj Hrvati, braćo mila iz Čavoglava/Hrvatska vam zaboravit' neće nikada'). While most televised patriotic popular music resembled German/Italian romantic pop or Anglo-American rock, *Čavoglave*'s guttural vocals and Macedonian 7/8 metre resembled the rock arrangements of folk motifs used by the 1970s–80s Sarajevo band Bijelo Dugme.

At a time when supposedly 'eastern' cultural forms had been largely removed from the Croatian media, *Čavoglave* was all the more striking (Derk 1992). Thompson's call to take the fight into Serbia also contravened the state discourse of Croatia fighting a non-aggressive defensive war. This may have accounted for his relative delay in getting state media airplay. *Čavoglave*'s HTV premiere occurred on *Slikom na sliku* (Pukanić 1992b), a news programme where journalists commented on other broadcasters' war reports. The format let HTV editorialise items and correct any 'errors', in this case avoiding implications that *Čavoglave*'s aggressive message, or 'za dom spremni' (used by the Ustaše) in the introduction, expressed official views of HTV or the state. Although HTV had several reasons for scepticism, broadcasters less constrained by state information policy could respond more quickly. The only change for national distribution did not affect the introduction but a reference to two villages near Čavoglave (Baljci and Mirlovići), replaced by 'srpski dobrovoljci' on the album version. Thompson said he had named Mirlovići in the first version because its Croats had fled and its Serbs had joined the Četniks: now that 100 Croats and even some Serbs from Mirlovići had heard the song and volunteered for Croatian units, he had removed it (Majetić 1992).

2.3.4 Thompson as personality

The Croatian press unanimously supported Thompson in 1992. Although other unit members had contributed to *Čavoglave* (Ivanišević 1992), coverage concentrated on Thompson as a personality, with an attractive image (usually photographed in camouflage uniform with a beret, long hair, and his rifle) and compelling story. Thompson and fourteen other villagers, he retold, had kept Čavoglave out of 'Četnik' hands after much better-equipped 'Četniks' had occupied Drniš and retreating Croatian forces had left the village undefended (Marković 1992). In these circumstances, *Čavoglave* had supposedly boosted soldiers' and Drniš refugees' morale as 'an injection of patriotic adrenalin' (Ferić 1992a). Journalists were fascinated with Thompson's difference from showbusiness musicians like Hrvatski Band Aid: 'even despite the disputable war cry ['za dom spremni'], "Čavoglave" does *not* give off an atmosphere of malign aggressiveness', just reflected the reality that 'life is dangerous' (Kuzmanović 1992; emphasis original). One journalist (anticipating Svanibor Pettan) directly contrasted *Čavoglave* with *STWIC* because Thompson had said 'what Croatian envoys in Brussels have not even dared whisper', i.e. that force was also necessary, meaning that Thompson and Ivčić had 'united both famous strategies of president Tuđman' (Uzelac 1992). *Arena's* first Thompson article summarised *Čavoglave's* appeal: it was 'a hard, masculine, real wartime song,' which, 'most importantly, [had] come from the front, in a break [between] battles' (Ferić 1992a).

Print media were crucial in creating a coherent star 'text' around Thompson. Profiles related Čavoglave's story to the wider war and added convincing details (units, dates). Texts could be endowed with extra historical or political meanings, like the information that villagers had similarly defended Čavoglave during the Second World War so that neither Serbian royalist Četniks nor Communist Partisans could enter it (Majetić 1992) – hence the song's warning to the enemy that 'you'll never get to Čavoglave, you never did before' ('nećete u Čavoglave, niste ni prije'). Modern-day Serbs were thus equated with the Četniks, and the JNA with Tito's Partisans. When Thompson spoke out against the 1992 Croat–Serb ceasefire because 'for us [the war] is not over as long as there's a single Četnik in our country' (Hrženjak 1992), he corroborated *Čavoglave's* defiant message and *Čavoglave* corroborated his personal resolve.

Soldierly music-making was not confined to *Čavoglave*: several units recorded songs for themselves or fundraising cassettes, and some soldiers received leave to perform charity concerts. While a few, like Dražen Zečić, became successful professionals after the war, none were so prominent during it as Thompson. At least one journalist appeared to be

deliberately seeking the ‘next’ Thompson: an *Arena* report on soldiers from Mirlović Polje briefly mentioned one Siniša Vuco singing *Vukovi sa Svilaje* (*Wolves from Svilaja*) to the unit (Ferić 1992b). Sub-editors added a headline about *Vukovi* and printed its lyrics in a sidebar, although most of the article actually concerned the unit’s unlikely members. *Večernji list* then hailed Vuco as the next Thompson (Ferić 1992c), but *Vukovi* did not survive into Vuco’s post-war presentation when he went professional.⁷⁸ Thompson may have owed his greater visibility to Runjić, who placed him into his annual pop festival and arranged for him to appear at concerts by one of Skalinada’s biggest acts, Magazin (whose vocalist, Danijela Martinović, he later briefly married).⁷⁹ Runjić released *Čavoglave* with the B-side *Moli mala* (*Pray, darling*), which capitalised on Thompson’s apparent appeal to a female audience by addressing a woman in a soldier’s voice and asking her to pray for him while he ‘counted down the gang’s last days’ (*dok ja bandi brojim zadnje dane*) because God and Mary wanted ‘us’ to live in a free Croatia.

Thompson returned to the wartime theme in 1994, when he was no longer an active soldier but still visited his old unit. *Anica, kninska kraljica* (*Anica, queen of Knin*) was, in Thompson’s words, ‘a story about a girl [called] Anica, who’s imprisoned in Knin and who we’re going to set free, burning down everything alive [sve živo] as we go’ (Rogošić 1994). Although ‘Anica’ was a metaphorical queen, the Croatian claim to Knin was legitimised by asking Croats to remember ‘the Knin of the Croatian king Zvonimir’ (*E, Hrvati, sjetimo se Knina/hrvatskoga kralja Zvonimira*) – a common rhetorical device at the time (Žanić 1995) which ‘delegitimized’ Serb presence in Krajina (Carmichael 2002:15). *Anica* was Thompson’s most aggressive song since *Čavoglave*, with its reference to burning down ‘two or three Serb bases, so that I haven’t come in vain’ (*‘zapalit ću dva-tri srpska štaba/da ja nisam dolazio džaba*). As such, it showed the limit of HTV’s tolerance for radical war aims. Thompson explained there had been a planned video featuring his old unit, but HTV had apparently said ‘the scenario was too aggressive’ for it to be played in either war or peace (Rogošić 1994). Yet ‘peacetime’ was not so easily defined: the ambiguous end of the war in eastern Slavonia kept popular music valuable as political communication.

⁷⁸ Vuco and Thompson both drew on Bosnian folk-rock in the mid-1990s, but their images diverged once Thompson began to engage with veterans’ social problems. Vuco did record a few patriotic songs late in the war, such as *Petar Krešimir* (1995, dedicated to a Livno brigade), but mostly sang about women and drinking. *Petar Krešimir* was framed similarly to *Čavoglave* (male friends resisting a grasping enemy who did not understand their defensive resolve) but unlike *Čavoglave* had no ethnic labels (just attributed the men to Livno). By 2005, Vuco was being represented in Serbia by a Belgrade label which either did not know or care about some of his wartime repertoire.

⁷⁹ Their joint singing of *Čavoglave* at 1992 concerts may have caused Magazin some problems in 2002 when touring Serbia.

2.4 Post-war popular music and the nation

2.4.1 Eastern Slavonia

The war's most enduring symbolic site, besieged and captured Vukovar, continued to stand for the fate of eastern Slavonia in the state national narrative throughout most of the decade: the Croatian statehood story would not be complete until the Croatian state, rather than the Krajina Serb Republic (RSK) or UNTAES, was in control of eastern Slavonia.

Eastern Slavonian refugees were meanwhile rebuilding their lives in unfamiliar surroundings, and 2,600 people from Vukovar remained missing (Kardov 2007:64).

Displacement from Vukovar and eastern Slavonia therefore remained a common theme in popular music, particularly Slavonian tamburica music, for much longer than other aspects of the war.⁸⁰ Although non-Slavonians helped memorialise Vukovar at the beginning of the war (2.2.3), the bulk of commemorative work was done by tamburaši, notably Zlatni dukati.

Dukati's first Vukovar song (*Vukovar, Vukovar*) appeared during the siege and compared Vukovar to a 'Slavonian oak' ('hrast slavonski') which would stand as long as the Danube flowed ('stoji dok protiču vode dunavske').⁸¹ The next, *Jesam li u Vukovaru* (*Am I in Vukovar*, 1993), was narrated in the voice of a refugee living in Zagreb dreaming of return. Their leader Josip Ivanković reinforced their claim to speak for Vukovar in media appearances by mentioning that several band members' hometowns were nearby (Vinkovci, Štitar) or that their last Vukovar concert had occurred shortly before the May 1991 massacre of Croatian policemen in a local suburb. He pledged to dedicate a song to Vukovar on each album '[u]ntil it's free' and described Vukovar as a national tragedy comparable to Hiroshima/Nagasaki in Japan (Brkan 1993). After Croatian gains against the RSK in June 1995, he also promised Dukati would be 'the first to enter Vukovar with tamburice' because '[w]e were the last people to perform in that sacred Croatian city and there is no force that can stop us in the intent' (Stažić 1995b).

Even *Vukovar, Vukovar* maintained a communicative role after the siege, as an image of the future rather than the present. Radio Vukovar had itself been an icon of Vukovar's defence thanks to Siniša Glavašević's famous cellar broadcasts. When it resumed broadcasting from Vinkovci in September 1992, the first song played was *Vukovar*,

⁸⁰ C.f. a corresponding genre in Serbian NCFM, 'krajiske pesme' ('Krajina songs'), narrating experiences of Serb refugees from Croatia/Bosnia.

⁸¹ Oaks symbolise 'toughness, virility and strength' compared to romanticised, pastoral lindens (Žanić 2007:67). One magazine claimed that when *Vukovar, Vukovar* premiered on the evening news, Vukovar had already fallen but HTV was delaying the news for morale purposes (Brkan 1991).

Vukovar, bearing out Ruza Bonifačić's claim (1998:147) that it was then 'almost the unofficial anthem of the city'.⁸² By that time, however, more new tamburica songs about Vukovar and Slavonia had begun to be collected by Slavonski Brod's annual Patriotic Song Festival (Brodfest), which began in 1992. Every festival contained several songs responding to the new conditions of everyday life in (or *not* in) Slavonia, which expressed wartime displacement with the same imagery used in semi-folk popular music to express economic migrants' 'ordinary' displacement. They could therefore narrate the war's effects in familiar terms (Baker, forthcoming (b)).

The major themes of Homeland War music (2.2) – the nation/its enemies, religion, territory, gender and history – were also present at Brodfest, although with slightly different emphases: history was a matter of timelessness rather than great events/leaders, and the nation's connection to the land was depicted through representations of everyday life and the idea of home. Interestingly, the liberation of Knin (immediately celebrated as the end of the war) seemed to have little effect on the Brodfest representations of Slavonia: if anything, Vukovar as the last unresolved issue became *more* important after 1995. In 1996 Lampaši still lamented 'all my Baranja's wounds' ('sve rane moje Baranje') where neither tamburice or prayers could be heard,⁸³ and Sinovi ravnice were still telling Vukovar that 'I won't let them all forget you, I still want to see your [river]banks' ('ne dam da te svi zaborave, ja još želim vidjet' obale') – a song the bandleader had apparently composed in 1992 while serving with 109 Brigade near Nuštar, within sight of Vukovar (Rašović 1997).

Territory and the course of the war were tightly connected in songs narrating the conflict. Slavonski bečari's 1994 *Istinu svijetu o Baranji reci* asked the neighbouring Danube and Drava rivers to 'tell the world the truth about Baranja'. The 'truth' was that 'we are a people of peace' ('mi smo narod mira') who liked making ham, salami and wine, and that until yesterday the narrator used to sing to his son but now the two were far apart, 'cold steel falls from the sky' ('hladan čelik pada iz visina') and 'the tamburica is quiet now, the rifle tells the story' ('tamburica sad šuti, puška priča priču') – but the Šokci (Baranja peasants) should not give up because 'the ancestors are shouting' ('nedajte se, Šokci, pradjedovi viču'). *Hrvati će Baranju imati* (*The Croats will have Baranja*) in 1997, also by Slavonski bečari, conveyed the pain of longing for home through a common folk metaphor, the bird. The narrator asked a falcon to greet his fields, meadows, vineyards and wine-cellars in Baranja, 'see whether Baranja is whole or our villages are destroyed'

⁸² The first song played when Radio Vukovar actually resumed broadcasting from there was another new patriotic song, Dike's *Dobro jutro Vukovare divni* (*Good morning, wonderful Vukovar*) (Šćavina 1997a).

⁸³ Baranja: north-eastern Slavonia, bordering on Hungarian Baranya.

(‘pogledaj mi jel’ Baranja cijela ili su nam porušena sela’) and then tell everyone that ‘I’ll come back to my home too’ (‘vratit ću se i ja domu svome’), with which ‘the Croats will have Baranja’.

Religion appeared in these songs as an aspect of customary life, thus another bond to the territory. Church bells could be among the signs of life and customs returning, as in Vera Svoboda’s *Opet će zvoniti zvona* (*The bells will ring again*, 1995), where the village bells had ‘had to fall silent’ (‘morala su utihnuti’); they would ring again, but heaven could not ‘bring an only son back to [his] mother’ (‘ne može da jedinca majci vrati’) even though God was watching her pray. In Ex Panonia’s *Dunavska čežnja* (*Danubian longing*, 1996), the religious ceremony took the place of a future wedding once an absent soldier came home to his fiancée who was sewing her trousseau. Svoboda’s *Posavina uvijek hrvatska je bila* (*Posavina has always been Croatian*, 1994) was based on an image of ‘that holy banner’ (‘taj barjak sveti’) which women sewed and men died for. The narrator’s grandfather (as in *Zemlja dide mog*) had told her to keep ‘these Croatian fields’ (‘ove njive hrvatske’) holy and that ‘our Croatian banner will always fly’ (‘naš hrvatski barjak uvijek će se viti’) as long as there were Posavinans.

Emptiness was even stronger in Đurđica Pleše’s *Vratit će se život u našu ravnicu* (*Life will come back to our plains*), also 1994, which suggested there was no life at all there: quinces were not growing in her garden, grandfather was not brewing rakija, horses were not going down her street, the fields were silent and youths were not kissing girls, but the ‘people’ and ‘old customs’ would return (‘vratit će se ljudi, običaji stari’) and Slavonia would flower again. Such imagery had problematic implications for the memory of Croat–Serb coexistence: an (admittedly disrupted) everyday life was still going on for Serbs who had remained in occupied Slavonia, but the discursive emptiness of occupied territory excised them from memory. This supports Kruno Kardov’s observation (2007:66) that ‘[f]or Croats, Krajina was not just an ethnically cleansed area but an utterly empty region – a region where it is therefore impossible to dwell’. In both the media and ethnic wars, the option of heterogeneity had had to be eradicated (Žarkov 2007:5).

A little popular music outside Brodifest also dealt with eastern Slavonia during the separation and reintegration years. At MHJ 1993 – the same festival that included *Zemlja dide mog*, Dražen Zečić’s uniformed performance and the soldiers’ telegrams – Zlatko Pejaković performed a song about Dalmatia’s separation from Slavonia using (lyrical and musical) images of a tamburica and a mandolin playing together to symbolise the regions’ physical reintegration when the Maslenica bridge (their only land connection) had been

recaptured that January. Long-standing traditions associated each instrument with Slavonia and Dalmatia, and the song (called *Tamburica i mandolina*) was arranged to follow references to each region with a tamburica/mandolin phrase; after the key change they played together at those points instead. Pejaković returned to the theme at an Osijek festival in 1996, where his song *Nemoj, Dunave (Danube, don't)* asked the river not to 'kiss both sides of your bank equally' ('nemoj [...] ljubiti jednako obje strane tvoje obale') – it should treat its right bank, especially Vukovar, more tenderly, and tell all the birds which had left Baranja to return. The neo-tamburica band Gazde also dealt with displacement on *Još i danas zamiriše trešnja* (*The cherry-tree's scent still remains today*, 1995), which its composer Miroslav Rus said had been inspired by Tomislav Marčinko – Lilić's deputy – and his memories of leaving Vojvodina for Croatia in 1990 (Maksimović 1996a).⁸⁴ The story suggests the prevalence of images of coexistence shattered by 'former neighbours': indeed, Jasna Čapo Žmegač (2007:51–2) found that Croatian refugees from nearby Srijem felt sadness at losing their homes and farms (often the result of generations of tending by the same family, and a status-marker in the village) that went well beyond the financial. However, the *Trešnja* story also indicates certain musicians' closeness to power.

These home/homeland mediations are reminiscent of Imperial German *Heimat* poetry and visual imagery, which extended from official propaganda to entertainment and tourism: the technique placed 'the impersonal nation [...] within the familiar local world' and promoted its internalisation (Confino 1997:9). However, one major difference was the landscape's content. *Heimat* images were based on a set of gentle hills which could have stood for any German town (Confino 1997:159), but the Croatian home(land) involved two typical landscapes, the plains and the coast. These corresponded to the 'Pannonian' and 'Adriatic' cultural areas in Milovan Gavazzi's classic ethnology; Gavazzi's third area, the 'Dinaric' (Balkan), was systematically underrepresented during the 1990s (Pettan 1996). The complementary plains and coast were displayed on several levels: inland Vukovar and coastal Dubrovnik as twin sites of wartime victimhood; Slavonian or Dalmatian singers appearing at the other region's televised festivals; Pejaković's tamburica/mandolin song; the sea/corn combinations in *Dajem ti srce* or *Moja domovina*. During the Yugoslav era, this plains–coastal duality was also available to refer to the whole of Yugoslavia: a 1980s song by the emblematic Yugoslav pop-folk singer Lepa Brena, *Jugoslovenka (Yugoslav woman)*, had described the female personification of Yugoslavia as having 'the Adriatic Sea' for eyes and

⁸⁴ Five or six years later it was covered by Bojan Bajramović, a Montenegrin, then became a posthumous hit for the Macedonian singer Toše Proeski in 2007–08; neither version used a tamburica.

‘Pannonian corn’ for hair (‘oči su mi more jadransko/kose su mi klasje panonsko’). Again, an existing nationhood narrative – the binary feminine-gendered landscape (see Mostov 2000) – was reconstituted to stand for Croatia rather than Yugoslavia.

2.4.2 Vukovar and the state

Vukovar memory politics were represented on medals, banknotes and street-signs as well as in ‘memoirs, songs and testimonies’ (Kardov 2007:65–6),⁸⁵ integrating Vukovar fundamentally into routinised ‘banal nationalism’. Vukovar was first commemorated at Brodifest in 1993 when the festival director Šima Jovanovac dedicated a song to Glavašević, who had disappeared after the siege (promising him a familiar male friendship experience – sitting down with ‘us’ while tamburica music soothed his pain – if he came back). However, it was most prominent in 1996–98, precisely during the UNTAES period and coinciding with Tuđman’s ostensibly presidential (but probably party-political) Sve hrvatske pobjede za Vukovar campaign before the 1997 elections. During the campaign Tuđman visited Vukovar by train like his 1995 Knin visit. *Večernji list*’s report called Vukovar ‘the greatest symbol of Croatian defence and suffering’ and mentioned ‘the unstoppable process of that region’s final reintegration into the Croatian state system’. It also claimed UNTAES had vetted the reception programme to avoid offending local Serbs and vetoed *Ravnica* – which the crowd sang anyway (Glavina et al. 1997). *Globus* (but not *Večernji list*) also suggested UNTAES had asked for Serbian folk dances in the programme (*Globus* 1997). A showbusiness tour accompanying the campaign was organised by the Herzegovinan musician Ranko Boban, who denied Tuđman was on the poster because of the elections: ‘We put the president on the poster because he is a symbol of Croatia, as this tour is the crown of events in Croatian showbusiness’ (Stjepandić 1997b). Croatia Records also took part by releasing a compilation. Even though CR had not been mentioned in the 1992 refugee-return memorandum (2.1.4), its involvement with the Vukovar campaign showed popular music was connected to the political system of media planning.

Yet another field of narrative production, school textbooks, also helped enshrine the Vukovar narrative. One pre-reintegration primary-school textbook explained the siege as ‘a battle with which one Croatian city was destroyed, and with its sacrifice the whole of Croatia was saved’. It adapted the story to children through the character of a boy whose family had fled to Zagreb and whose brother had been killed when prisoners were kidnapped from Vukovar hospital. Tomislav had just started school when ‘they’, ‘some

⁸⁵ Kardov’s only reference to music – even though his chapter’s title (Remember Vukovar) echoes *Gospodine generale*.

kind of bearded army', arrived with 'strange songs' (as in the familiar news image of bearded Četnik paramilitaries occupying Vukovar) and 'destroyed my city, house by house', killing innocents as they went (Palaš 1997:102–3). Vukovar returned near the end of the book as a once-beautiful city now 'in ruins, broken and abandoned' until the 'Far-Away Star' sent it a heavenly vision of its people coming back 'because they are proud of you', waving flags and singing (Palaš 1997:247–8). The linear process of suffering, displacement, nostalgia/sadness and return was found in the mass media, in children's texts and in Brodfest songs about Vukovar during the UNTAES period.⁸⁶

However, Vukovar glorification died down after reintegration was complete and Vukovar's devastation became the state's problem. Brodfest began to concern itself with a more abstract narrative of nationhood composed of different regions (hinted by its 1998 slogan 'I kaj i ća i što', referring to different dialects of Croatian), perhaps reflecting the narrative that after Vukovar's reintegration 'the stabilization of Croatian identity' could now take place (Kardov 2007:67). The challenges of rebuilding everyday social life and 'the myth [...] of unity in ethnicity' (Mountcastle and Donan 2001:115) which unravelled locally when people went 'home' were not material for patriotic music, although under Titoism, with its industrial cult, this might have been a different matter (one song encouraging young people to join work brigades (*Obnova i izgradnja – Renovation and construction*) had been sung by the Croatian rock-and-roll singer Dado Topić as a worker showing off a railway-line to Tito). Instead, idealised depictions of return from the hardship of refugeedom, like German Heimat images which passed over industrial working-class deprivation, 'kept reality at a safe distance' (Confino 1997:184).

2.4.3 Hrvatski pleter, 1995–2000

The other post-war state-backed connection between popular music and the nation was made through the 1995–2000 military song festival Hrvatski pleter (Croatian stonework) initiated by General Ivan Tolj. Tolj, head of the defence ministry's political board, viewed musical/literary activity as a means of promoting the historical statehood narrative he articulated in his own writing and interviews (e.g. Galić 1996): some of his poetry was even

⁸⁶ The music industry often 'returned' to eastern Slavonia in 1998. Doris Dragović became the first Croatian singer to 'return' to Vukovar when she tearfully held a concert there in March 1998: *Arena* photographed her near the famous bombed-out water-tower holding a Vučedol dove (another Vukovar symbol) bedecked with a tricolour ribbon, and she refused to say she felt afraid in Vukovar 'because what then did those people feel who survived [the prison-camp] Ovčara, murders in cellars, reprisals, leaving their city' (Mikola 1998). Radio Velika Gorica also held its annual Narodni vez awards there, Vukovar's first major tamburica event for seven years (Šimunović 1998a). Josipa Lisac and Nina Badrić held commemorative concerts in memory of exhumed victims there in May 1998 (*Arena* 1998).

used in literature textbooks (Fisher 2003:81). HP was largely amateur, with participation restricted to current/former members of the Croatian Army and HVO (Croatian Defence Council, i.e. the Bosnian Croat army), including civilian staff (Morić 1995) – although some professionals qualified through their wartime service. HP's director Žarko Delač stated it should 'cultivate a new spirit in the Croatian army' and 'show soldiers in a different light through a cultural and musical component' (*Večernji list* 1996). The project emerged at the same time as the HTV military documentary series *Sinovi oluja* (*Sons of storms*), suggesting that this was a period of institutionalising the army's place in post-war society. Indeed, Alex Bellamy and Timothy Edmunds (2005:72–3) have argued that from 1993 and 2000 the army's primary role was one of 'regime defence', supporting HDZ in various informal ways. HP thus contributed to an ongoing celebration of the military.

HP was the state's most direct effort to memorialise soldiers through music. Its songs promoted a loyalty to the homeland extending from a nationalised love of one's birthplace to honourable sacrifice in war. Key locations (Šibenik) and individuals (Josip Jović, the policeman killed at Plitvice in April 1991) were commemorated, and the general ideal of sacrifice was promoted: Zoran Jelenković's *U sjećanje na ratnika* (*In memory of a warrior*) depicted a young soldier's funeral and praised his mother for giving up a warrior, knight and son. However, HP ceased in 2000, perhaps another casualty of the post-Tuđman defence reforms; its one genuine hit, Tomislav Bralić's (4.5.3), owed its popularity to the 2006 klapa revival instead. A longer-lasting musical representation of soldiers and veterans was the disappointment/betrayal narrative articulated by Baruni and Thompson in some of their late-1990s music. Thompson first dealt with it in 1996, when his song *Ne varaj me* (*Don't trick me*) presented peace celebrations as illusory. A *Nedjeljna Dalmacija* report on the Cro Etno Neum (3.2.3) festival in Herzegovina, where Thompson premiered *NVM*, read *NVM* as implying the war would not be over until Herzegovina joined the Croatian state (Glavan 1996), although the lyrics themselves contained no political programme.

Baruni's first veterans song was *Kada Sava krene prema Brodu* (*When the [river] Sava turns towards Brod*, 1997), depicting a veteran who could not make someone in Zagreb understand what Posavina (a front-line region) meant to him, and adapting a well-known proverb to comment 'five years of any guest is enough' ('svakog gosta pet godina dosta') – perhaps a reference to the UN presence in eastern Slavonia. Thompson, meanwhile, used his own veteran status to claim the right to speak for others. His 1998 song *Prijatelji* (*Friends*), evoked wartime camaraderie and asked whether veterans felt 'cheated' and whether time had 'trampled' them ('jesu li vas prevarili, jel' nas vrijeme pregazilo?') – comparable to the

'myth of the war experience' (Mosse 1985:126) in veterans' accounts after the First World War (Senjković 2002:188-9). Its video showed society's disrespect for ex-soldiers' sacrifices (provocatively-dressed girls; children playing war games; news footage of the Bosnian Croat general Tihomir Blaškić on trial at the ICTY). *NVM*'s potential implicit integralist message became explicit in 1999 when Thompson's *Lijepa li si* (*How beautiful you are*) gave 'Herceg-Bosna' equal status to other Croatian regions (Senjković and Dukić 2005:52). A version featuring male singers from all the regions was intended as a 1999 Christmas single, but delayed on Tuđman's death (Pacek 1999): the video was re-edited with a scene of Thompson at Tuđman's grave. Reana Senjković (2002:269) attributed the components of *LLS* to the 'current of symbols' established by Tuđman's 1990s discourse. Politically, this was true, but *LLS*'s region/homeland images also depended on codes for expressing performers' relationship to place which had been developed during federal Yugoslav showbusiness.

Thompson's and Baruni's oppositional patriotism was somewhat at odds with the veterans' movement's actual status in the late 1990s, when the state had largely co-opted it (Fisher 2003:76). It prefigured political veterans' more radical line after 2000 when the Mesić state was no longer so amenable to their demands. As such, it suggests that tendencies to take 2000 as the major political and cultural turning-point should not be over-stretched. 2000's change of government certainly enabled media reforms which altered the conditions for broadcast music, and gave Mesić a privileged platform for his historical interpretations stressing the anti-fascist legacy. However, the discontent to which patriotic music responded after 2000 (4.1) had originated as a response to late-1990s government economic policy.

2.5 Remembering the nineties through music

The present-day relevance of 1990s patriotic music (or any other kind) depends on songs' and videos' continued availability and visibility: are they still played on television and radio? Do artists still perform them in concerts? Have they appeared on new patriotic or greatest-hits compilations? Do they circulate online? In relation to musical texts which help narrate the nation, these decisions and activities can be seen as ongoing memorial practices which prolong and change the narration. The 'afterlife' of patriotic music thus contributes to the continual reproduction of the 'hegemonic, common-sense' (Edensor 2002:20) nation.

Broadcasting explicitly commemorative songs on official memorial days may also ‘signal’ listeners to ‘focus their attention’ on remembering (Meyers and Zandberg 2002:403).

Such ‘signalling’ was already occurring during the Homeland War: during Oluja HRT broadcast so many 1991 songs that *Feral* satirised it by printing their lyrics on every page of one issue, and for some time *Moja domovina* was HTV’s introductory jingle (Radović 1995). A CR Oluja compilation contained one new song, *Kapučino u Kninu* (*Cappuccino in Knin*), and a selection of earlier ones (including *Moja domovina*, *Hrvatine*, *Čavoglave*, *Od stoljeća sedmog*, *Bili cvitak* and *Ravnica*): the presence of the 1992 hit *Hercegovina u srcu* (*Herzegovina in the heart*) and the band-aid song which had accompanied a HDZ campaign about Istria in 1993 (3.2.2) clearly indicated the post-war state’s claims to sovereignty. Wartime popular music is also used as a means of commemoration today, as in the continued tradition of a Knin fortress concert to mark Oluja (now held on the anniversary itself). The 2007 edition included performances of *To je tvoja zemlja* (a Vice Vukov song from 1969, during the Croatian Spring), *Bože, čuvaj Hrvatsku* (performed this time by Jacques Houdek who had been singing its latest replacement as the HDZ anthem), *Ravnica*, *Moja domovina* (an instrumental theme for the credits), *Mi smo garda hrvatska* (an instrumental accompanied by majorettes in national costume) and *Od stoljeća sedmog*. OSS was the final song to be performed, so that the last words sung on the fortress were ‘since the 7th century the Croats have breathed here’ (*od stoljeća sedmog tu Hrvati dišu*).

The banalisation of commemoration by inserting commemorative markers into unrelated series also continued: e.g. the chart-show *Hit do bita* (*Hit after hit*) came from Vukovar on Statehood Day 2004 (*Arena* 2004). However, HTV’s programming director Domagoj Burić caused an outcry in May 2008 by requesting that the summer magazine-show *30 u bladu* (*30 [degrees] in the shade*) finish with a joint broadcast from Prevlaka and Vukovar – perpetuating the dual Vukovar/Dubrovnik memorialisation. Burić further asked for the show’s title to include ‘Croatia’, and for the finale to include fireworks ‘so that the boys from the other side of Boka Kotorska and the Danube [i.e. across the Montenegrin/Serbian borders] see and hear what’s going on’, plus ‘the sounds of “Moja domovina”’ (Rožman and Rešković 2008a). Unlike the 1990s, many prominent HTV journalists protested against the memo – so the affair could not be taken as the entire institution’s practice – and the president of the Croatian Journalists’ Society called it ‘a breach of journalistic etiquette’ (Rožman and Rešković 2008b). The production of musical memory can moreover sidestep official institutions or rights-holders altogether. The controversial online persistence of many pro-Ustaša songs (Senjković and Dukić 2005)

owes more to individuals uploading old cassette recordings than to their performers or authors.

The students I asked about their memories of music during the 1990s (when they were young teenagers) generally named ‘patriotic’ music, along with dance (3.2.1), as one of the decade’s chief musical trends. Lana’s strongest impression involved ‘band aids’ and *STWIC*, as well as Škoro and Thompson (whom we had already been talking about). Nina’s immediate response, too, was ‘band-aids’, Ivčić and songs going ‘save Croatia, free Croatia, help Croatia’. Kristina was some ten years older than them and remembered a greater range of singers with patriotic songs – Đani Maršan, Danijela Martinović, Doris Dragović, Thompson and the children’s band-aid. However, she too told me first about ‘a campaign, I think [by] HTV and musicians in general [...] it was actually all the Croatian musicians who performed it’.

Moja domovina’s predominance in informants’ memories of music during the war seems to point to HTV’s success in mediating musical memory. Songs heavily promoted by HTV received the most exposure during the war, sold more copies and enjoyed greater popularity, making them more likely to be used for post-war compilations or commemorative airplay. ‘Canonisation’ was also assisted by press overviews of wartime musical production (e.g. Radović 1995) – which could exclude entire categories such as the ‘underground’ pro-Ustaša songs or the 1993–94 songs by soldiers and refugees about the war in Bosanska Posavina. Musicians who continue to deal with patriotic themes (e.g. Škoro, Thompson) still make their debut wartime songs central to their repertoire, although Electro Team – who also had their debut with a wartime song (*Molitva za mir*) – are far better known for their 1993–95 dance singles. Memorialisation through compilations is also affected by political change. Croatia Records compilations in 1995 and 2001 (the tenth anniversary of *Moja domovina*) included *Hrvatine*, Đuka Čaić’s hit which had caused so much controversy in 1991 for its apparent Ustaša references and been missing from the main CR compilations at the time. The HSP challenge to the state had long been neutralised, and excluding its ideology from symbolic space was no longer such an imperative.

Narrowing wartime music down to several well-known songs has also reduced the range of narratives about the war. A ‘canon’ dominated by *Moja domovina* and *STWIC* presents the Homeland War as a time of unity in hardship – as general a representation as possible, where thorny questions of responsibility for violence need not be considered. The rough edges of war memory – far-right revivalism and ethnic intolerance – nonetheless live on in the *Čavoglave* controversies (4.6). Meanwhile, the post-war patriotic music about the

symbolic reintegration of eastern Slavonia or the army's continued position in society has largely fallen by the wayside, except when individual songs are recycled in the post-2000 network of patriotic musical production (4.5).

Conclusion

The production of popular music dealing with the nation during the 1990s showed that the Croatian state viewed it as a viable, useful means of political communication. Its communicative role was strongest during the Homeland War, but even afterwards it was used to support particular ideological goals (resolving the ambiguity of eastern Slavonia; praising Tuđman's contribution to its reintegration; mediating the army's presence in society). Popular music was also affected by the journalistic politics of representation within state broadcasting, which demonstrated that state ideology was a discursive field rather than a single discourse: incidents such as the *Hrvatine* controversy tested limits and exposed ideological contradictions, producing a bundle of narratives which still agreed on essentials such as the legitimacy of statehood and the just cause of Croatia's war. Such a view recalls Rogers Brubaker's conception (1996:17) of nationalism and even the nation itself as the product of 'political fields'. Tying popular music to the symbolic power of the state thus expands the valuable research on Croatia which has called attention to regional or gendered aspects of music-making and situated music within wartime everyday life.

Homeland War music still produces meaning more than fifteen years later when it is remembered or replayed. Individual songs' precise messages may have faded to a handful of examples (predominantly *STWIC*, *Moja domovina* and *Čavoglave*), but the memory that patriotic music *was* produced still appears important in musical recollections of the decade. Perhaps this has helped achieve and perpetuate one ideological aim of the 1990s, associating the birth of the state with the successful defensive war – supporting Dejan Jović's argument (2006:91) that under Tuđman the Homeland War became a new 'constitutive myth' for Croatia. However, if one follows the 'demobilisation' argument the content of narratives would appear less important: for Gagnon (2004:xv), the ruling party used the state's prevailing symbolic power to deprive potential challengers of space to articulate their own narratives and challenges (see also Carmichael 2002). From this perspective, the most significant thing about state-backed popular music would not be its ways of narrating the nation, but its part in breaking down social reality and reconstituting it in ethnic terms. The implications of this perspective are discussed further in Chapter 6.

Many people who bought, listened to or participated in *Moja domovina* would probably not characterise it as an ideological project (in which they would therefore be implicated themselves) to change people's values and memories, or as part of a sinister and antagonistic 'media war'. Indeed, musicians' participation in the Croatian cause through music-making in autumn 1991 encompassed the vast majority of professional musicians from a range of political and musical backgrounds – and in the case of *Moja domovina* itself there is some uncertainty whether the initial concept even referred specifically to Croatia. However, state ideology operated through the selection and editorialising processes of HRT and semi-state institutions like *Večernji list* or CR. Incidents such as the repackaging of Miroslav Škoro's emigration song as a wartime narrative demonstrate the responsibility of 'cultural intermediaries' (Negus 2002:503) – both creative and executive staff – in carrying out ideological work. These institutions set the conditions which incentivised the production of music with suitable themes and standpoints, while marginalising less suitable products – which in this case came largely from the right.

The above account of popular music as political communication should not suggest it is a peculiarly Croatian, ex-Yugoslav, eastern European or post-socialist phenomenon. As Michael Billig points out (1995:8), 'banal nationalism' is also visible in long-established democracies, and politics is still implicated in popular music when the British monarchy legitimates its hegemonic constitutional position with musical events (Duffett 2004) or a US media corporation bans a group after their speaking out against the President on the eve of war (Croft 2006:179). The articulation of pop and politics is structured by the state's current and previous involvement with the media, the specific needs of political actors in a given situation (e.g. a declaration of independence or the outbreak of war), and the body of common-sense beliefs which may provide resonant imagery. In Croatia, a newly independent state, the matter at hand was the programme of 'symbolic construction' (Kertzer 1987:178) needed to promote a separate national history and culture. The music discussed in this chapter contributed to this project in an overt, deliberate way. However, symbolic legitimation and delegitimation also occurred in the background when cultural boundaries were defined or questioned.

3 The cultural politics of music, 1991–99

Talking about music – in a variety of registers – allowed another set of narratives of cultural identity, besides overt national ones, to be expressed. The state contributed by institutionally supporting and marginalising certain musical forms, but musicians, mediators (executives, broadcasters, critics, promoters) and individuals, who encountered music in everyday life in many ways, also affected the conditions for production and consumption as they negotiated Croatia's new political and economic circumstances and the tensions of 1990s cultural space. This chapter follows Katherine Verdery's attention (1991:5) to the '*politics* of culture' which surround identity questions making any cultural activity contested. Verdery (1991:9), following Bourdieu (1977), argues that national ideologies manifest as discursive fields which limit what cultural professionals and intellectuals can say and do.

Those familiar with Croatian entertainment might be surprised to see 'intellectuals' extended to producers of light-entertainment (zabavna) music. In their professional field they still count as such in Verdery's sense: people 'privileged in forming and transmitting discourses' because of 'recognized specialist claims to knowledge or symbolic capital' (Verdery 1991:17). They still had superior access to 'means of information and communication', which help confer symbolic power (Thompson 1995:16). However, Zygmunt Bauman's illustration of the dispute between 'intellectuals' and purveyors of 'market-led culture as entertainment' suggests that the label 'intellectual' is itself a resource in professional competition. Bauman (1992:17) argues that the state's increasing disinterest in culture (at the expense of 'intellectuals') has left culture 'subordinated to' producing consumers rather than state subjects. However, even market-driven entertainment production involves the production of meaning and struggles for the power of representation (Hall 1997a) – and in 1990s Croatia it could hardly be said that Tuđman's state was disinterested in culture.

Even when these discursive fields' precise boundaries are challenged, there is agreement on what the fields are – suggesting that the symbolic construction of identity can also help us understand cultural politics. Constructing any group identity can be seen as a dynamic process involving judgements of similarity to and difference from others, which must be both articulated and recognised when agreeing on identities (Jenkins 1996:3–4). Such judgements are often expressed through symbols taken to represent the reason for similarity or difference (Cohen 1985:12). Jenkins and Cohen demonstrate the importance

of narratives, claims and counter-claims in Verdery's discursive fields. The field is produced and elaborated when its boundaries are tested – or at the points Homi Bhabha (2004:2–3) calls 'interstices'.

I therefore concentrate on the interstices of 1990s musical politics rather than attempting a straight history of the 1990s music industry. The amount of space given to particular developments or performers will almost certainly not reflect local notions of 'quality', and some of the most critically-acclaimed musicians unfortunately appear briefly if at all. This stems from a belief that contestation is usually more revealing than consensus (Verdery 1991:126). The identity narratives promoted through the musical texts discussed here were not as explicit as Chapter 2's; instead, they were made intelligible and relevant by the cultural ethnopolitics which preoccupied 1990s musicians, broadcasters, critics and politicians. The campaign against 'eastern' folk music, the promotion of the tamburica as a symbol of central-European westernness, and the brief musical prominence of particular regions provided contestible narratives of national cultural identity. Meanwhile, individuals responded to new cultural developments when making sense of the world around them, developing and revising the narratives that underlay their reflexive sense of self (see Giddens 1991). Music's significance in the 'on-going work of social construction' (DeNora 1999:31) was even harnessed to political ends, as during the opposition's 1999 election campaign.

3.1 The tamburica movement

The goal of developing a suitably 'Croatian' popular music for the newly-independent state involved several assumptions – most fundamentally, assuming a nation-state required a distinctively 'national' popular music. This involved Herder's idea that different peoples could be distinguished by their folk musics (see Mitchell 2007:8) and the logic of nation-states accumulating cultural/political symbols of statehood (flags, currencies etc.) to prove their membership of the 'world of nations' (Billig 1995:8). Most 1990s musical 'intellectuals' had also been socialised under the Yugoslav system, where the existence of a 'national' popular music was crucial as a sign that socialist Yugoslavia was neither fully East or West (Vuletić 2007:84). Although socialist ideology had been rejected during Croatia's independence process, certain assumptions still survived – e.g. the idea that a national popular music would convey *some* message about the nation's civilisational position.

It was further assumed a national musical identity should emphasise the Croatian people's difference from its neighbours. This showed symbolic identity-construction at work: certain boundary symbols 'our' culture possessed or lacked were understood to mark 'us' off from 'them', although the markers' precise location was debatable. Certain neighbours were still more excluded than others: membership of a 'central-European' cultural area was highly-valued, but similarity to 'eastern neighbours' (Bosniaks/Serbs) or the 'east' itself could doubt Croatia's cultural and therefore political independence under a national ideology which conceived of Croats and Serbs as representatives of different (western/eastern) civilisations (Bellamy 2003:68). The key symbol of Croatia's westernness in this context was the tamburica (Ceribašić 2000:227).

In the 1990s state media workers and professional tamburica-players ('tamburaši') shared a discourse relating tamburica to several important concepts in Tuđman's public ideology: the Croats' historical continuity, their political unification, their peacefulness, their Europeanness, and the expression of national identity through the folklore of one's particular region. Tamburica's prominence also suited Tuđman's strategy of legitimation through parallels with earlier Croatian leaders, in this case the 1920s agrarian leader Stjepan Radić who had also been associated with it (Žanić 2007:66), casting Tuđman as Radić's successor. Most prosaically, a tamburica-based domestic pop industry might offer more professional and financial opportunities to existing tamburaši, depending on whether the power to produce, judge and authenticate would be reserved for them or extended to showbusiness producers. The struggle to determine cultural identity through music was therefore accompanied by competition for influence in music sales and broadcasting.

3.1.1 Nationalising the tamburica tradition

Even though 1990s tamburaši often claimed the Yugoslav regime that repressed tamburica because it symbolised Croatian identity,⁸⁷ 1980s tamburica production laid the groundwork for the 1990s genre. The Croatian group Zlatni dukati, at the forefront of 1980s tamburica, were first represented by PGP-RTB, the music-publishing arm of RTV Belgrade.⁸⁸ PGP-RTB produced 20 videos for them before they moved to Zagreb's Jugoton (Naprt 1992b). Dukati's 1989–90 career, however, signalled or inspired tamburica's reorientation from connoting the wider 'Pannonian'/Danubian plain to a more narrowly national symbol

⁸⁷ E.g. Siniša Leopold's reference to Croatian tastes suffering 'fifty-year musical torture' (Omanović-Pacek 1995), or *Večernji list*'s tamburica correspondent mentioning 'plagues imposed on us from the east of the former state' (Šagovac 1996).

⁸⁸ Šima Jovanovac, the tamburaš who founded Brodfest, had likewise started on the Serbian label Diskos (Vulić 1994).

standing for Croatia by extension from Slavonia (Croatia's Pannonian–Danubian area). Besides Slavonia, tamburica was also strong in Vojvodina, the Pannonian part of Serbia ruled by Austria–Hungary rather than the Serbian kingdom before Yugoslav unification in 1918 (Forry, forthcoming). The 1980s tamburica scene had involved both regions until Dukati began arranging Croatian patriotic songs in 1989, when production began to fragment along national lines and became politicised (Bonifačić 1993:190).

Dukati's 1989 album *Hrvatska pjesmarica* (Croatian songbook) was the occasion for Croatia's first right-wing tabloid *Slobodni tjednik* to extend its campaign against the Croatian Communists into popular music.⁸⁹ *ST* printed claims by two Jugoton workers (one a HDZ member) that Jugoton's director Marko Bošnjak had been a Communist appointee and obstructed the release of *Pjesmarica* (and another patriotic album by Vera Svoboda) even though he had allowed Jugoton to produce a cassette of Serbian patriotic songs 'while the Četniks were sharpening their knife on Croatia' (Tardelli 1990) – a reference to Milošević's anti-Croatian rhetoric and the beginning of the Croatian Serb rebellion. Bošnjak argued he had actually fought for Jugoton to release *Pjesmarica* in a back-door arrangement to circumvent official policies against promoting nationalism (Stipić 1990).⁹⁰ Whoever was right, tamburica had effectively been politicised as a Croatian value under threat from an expansionist Serbia operating through Yugoslav federal structures. Indeed, tamburica had already become a political symbol when HDZ hired Dukati and other tamburaši for its entertainment-packed electoral rallies in 1990. HDZ's success associated Dukati's 'national trend based on folk tradition' with the party (Bonifačić 1998:138), and the group remained in HDZ's entertainment package throughout the decade.

HDZ's electoral tamburica strategy required public awareness of tamburica's ideological significance. The day-to-day work of relating tamburica to state ideology and current politics was largely carried out by the state media, especially HTV, and the tabloid *Večernji list*. HTV broadcast music and supported the festivals which dominated early 1990s pop production. *VL*'s interview-based showbusiness supplement commented on all aspects of entertainment and even HTV's internal affairs, giving professionals a site for locating themselves and others within cultural identity narratives. *VL* never challenged the idea of a state broadcaster with responsibility for transmitting Croatian culture, and its relationship

⁸⁹ Self-managed Jugoton probably was inefficient, with 420 employees and 5 workers' councils (Rasmussen 2002:88), but *ST*'s campaign appeared more political than pragmatic.

⁹⁰ When Jugoton did begin to unreservedly release Croatian patriotic music, it took out a full-page advertisement in *VL* at Christmas 1990 – that itself suggesting a rejection of socialist ideology.

with HTV provided a cross-media platform for articulating and naturalising certain narratives.

The dominant tamburica narrative had two related strands: a) that tamburica expressed the folk culture of all Croats (not just from Slavonia or even Croatia), and b) that folk music from Serbia/Bosnia should be excluded as an unwelcome foreign threat. The tamburica could therefore be a 'barrier against the east' or a 'barrier against narodnjaci', i.e. against so-called 'newly-composed folk music' (NCFM). The association with Slavonia's front-line experiences (ch. 2) deepened its symbolism. Through *V/L* tamburaši often debated professional matters which impinged on their privileged status: whether to allow non-traditional accompaniment (electric guitars, percussion), and whether non-tamburaši from showbusiness should be using the instrument. The ideology which gave tamburica its political meaning was not up for discussion – as might be expected given Katherine Verdery's observation (1991:11) that debate actually helps construct hegemony by promoting 'unspoken agreement [...] on certain fundamental premises'.

What supposedly made the tamburica so Croatian was its use by the 19th-century Illyrian movement (Omanović-Pacek 1995) and then by Radić's Croatian Peasant Party during the first Yugoslavia, where it had acquired its connotations of 'resistance to foreign domination' and "'pure" Croatian folk culture' (unlike the urban mixing of Croatian culture and foreign influence). However, it had not always stood for difference between Croats and Serbs: in the late 19th century it had actually symbolised *similarity* between Slav peoples resisting assimilationist German/Magyar oppression under Austria–Hungary because the Czechs and 'the Serbs north of the Sava and the Danube' played it too (Žanić 2007:66). The tamburica had endured as a boundary-symbol for Croats, but the boundary had moved over time to follow the focus of ethno-political conflict.

The conductor of the HRT tamburica orchestra, Siniša Leopold, related the tamburica to the Croats' 20th-century political experiences. The tamburica was allegedly played in Lika, Zagorje, Podravina, Dalmatia and Slavonia before 'the creation of the independent Croatian state'. Socialist Yugoslav cultural policy had supposedly promoted Serbian/Bosnian NCFM and denied the Croatian tamburica its role in public life.⁹¹ During the 1970–71 'Croatian Spring', the tamburica flourished and suffered alongside Croatian nationalism. Tamburica ensembles then supported the wartime Croatian cause through fundraising concerts and performing for troops, so that the tamburica could take its

⁹¹ Donna Buchanan (2007b:30) nonetheless mentions socialist-era tamburica orchestras playing Bosnian *sevdalinka*.

deserved place in independent Croatia as the national instrument (Šagovac 1996). Indeed, the presidential narrative of the war (peaceable Croats vs. barbarian Serb expansionism) was frequently projected back into a statehood-centric interpretation of historical conflicts (Bellamy 2003:69). Even though tamburaši accepted that the Ottomans had brought tamburica to the Balkans in the 14th–15th centuries and the Croats should have been there since the 7th, it was still used as evidence of ethno-historical continuity: e.g. Miroslav Škoro called it proof that Croats had been there ‘since, as Dražen Žanko said, the 7th century’ (Pacek 1997a). Indeed, the tamburica seemed to be one of those externally-originating symbols which nonetheless acquire new ‘indigenous meanings’ (Cohen 1985:37).⁹²

The discourse about tamburica-at-war indicated that ‘easternness’ in the barrier-against-the-east discourse related primarily to the supposed cultural otherness, barbarity, military aggression and genocidal intent of the contemporary Serbian east. Dubravko Šimek belonged to a post-Dukati tamburica group, Agrameri,⁹³ whose members volunteered when war broke out. He linked their reaction to their position ‘on the front lines of the struggle against eastern newly-composed trash [šund]’: because they had been ‘rehabilitating the unfairly neglected instrument, tamburica’ since before the political struggle for ‘our national spirit and identity’ began, it should be no wonder they had quickly joined up (Šagovac 1991). This interview combined two common frames of state-media war coverage (brave volunteers defending their home/homeland, and peace-loving innocence resisting enemy aggression). Similar images also recurred in news reporting – e.g. tamburaši in Slavonski Brod playing on to celebrate Croatia’s international recognition even as ‘the enemy’ shelled their hall (Derk 1992) – and even in academic ethnomusicology, where tamburica’s evocation of honest hard-working farmers was contrasted to the Balkan tribalism and patriarchy implicit in the Serbs’ adopting the gusle (Ceribašić 2000:226). The 19th-century Croatian poet Ivan Mažuranić had also written of the pastoral tamburica and warlike gusle, but as complementary values Croats should display (Žanić 2007:63). The 1990s’ official boundary of Croatian cultural identity instead followed the tamburica/gusle line, regardless of where this left gusle-playing Herzegovinan Croats.

The tamburica would thus offer a bulwark against non-Croatian folk/pop’s so-called ‘eastern melos’, based on a myth of non-tamburica-playing Serbs which ignored

⁹² In Greece, the bouzouki (like a tamburica) is internally othered because of its Ottoman associations (Tragaki 2005): similar origins, different results.

⁹³ Their name played on the German/Austrian name for Zagreb.

Vojvodinan–Slavonian cultural contacts (Hudelst 1995).⁹⁴ One tamburica entrepreneur, Zdravko Šljivac, claimed this as enough to ‘divide us from the eastern neighbours’ even when tamburica and NCFM songs often shared similar vocabulary (Goles 1998). The myth ultimately traded on a motif of Croatia itself as a bulwark of Europe, Christianity, culture, democracy and/or the West which had underpinned Croatian identity narratives for 500 years (Žanić 2003:196). Indeed, Darko Hudelist directly related the state anti-NCFM campaign to Tuđman’s historical ideas about civilisations. Tuđman saw a ‘cultural, historical and geographical’ difference between Croats and Serbs dating back to the Roman Empire’s east–west division in AD 395, suggesting it was fundamentally unnatural for Croats to ever be in the same state as Serbs (Bellamy 2003:68–9). As per his opening speech to Zagreb’s International Folklore Festival in 1990, he viewed maintaining folk traditions as an essential step in national survival (Kućinić-Bojić 1990). Hudelist (1998a) argued that the state media’s exclusion of NCFM formed part of Tuđman’s ‘spiritual renewal’ policy, where the tamburica would be ‘the “sacred” national instrument’ and ‘an inviolate symbol of unadulterated [nepatvorene] Croatia and Croatianness’ just like the Croatian coat-of-arms or Zagreb cathedral. Like them, it would contribute to the symbolic technology of everyday nationalism.

3.1.2 Excluding NCFM

The first phase of musical politics in independent Croatia concerned the Bosnian/Serbian/Macedonian ‘newly-composed folk music’ which had been available throughout Yugoslavia (see Rasmussen 2002). Whereas tamburica stood for the Croatian/European west, NCFM stood for the Yugoslav/Serbian/Balkan/alien east which should be excluded from public cultural space with a view to eliminating it altogether. In regime eyes, this would restructure cultural space and help construct the new ‘symbolic universe’ (Zakošek 2000:110) by affecting everyday life. Tamburica could replace NCFM because it dealt with similar topics, such as everyday village family and romantic life or its adaptation to urban surroundings, and could target similar audiences and functions, such as radio request-shows where songs naming places or life-stages were always popular (see Čolović 1985). Cultural symbolism aside, there were evidently strong practical reasons to

⁹⁴ When the Serbian broadcaster RTS produced Eurovision in 2008, one semi-final opened with a tamburica performance – acknowledging Vojvodina and complementing the Roma trumpeters in the other semi-final.

promote tamburica to 'fill the gap' left behind by NCFM.⁹⁵ Indeed, the 1990s recording industry as a whole was characterised by attempts to make up for NCFM with greater or lesser success.

The first discursive assault on NCFM began in late 1990 when the organisers of the annual Zagrebifest stated that 'in line with the positive social and cultural changes in the Republic of Croatia' they considered that zabavna music 'with all the influences of the "newly-composed" melos' did not satisfy their quality criteria (Luić 1990b). In a further attempt to distance themselves from Yugoslav festivals,⁹⁶ they also added a Christmas songs night (Luić 1990a), which socialist atheism would never have permitted. This was a rare *public* instance of excluding NCFM during the establishment of the Croatian state; more usually it was dropped from coverage, broadcast, performance and sale with no explanation, as if it had never existed. In 1993, a Radio Zagreb folk-music editor, Krešimir Filipčić, readily admitted that 'over the last couple of years we've taken all the songs with the ekavica lyrics of folk music from the east out of the programme' (Španović 1993). His reference to 'ekavica', the vowel variation denoting Serbian rather than Croatian language (Croatian used 'ijekavica'), indicated that cultural and linguistic policy were interdependent (6.2.1). Excluding NCFM excised a prominent vehicle for the Serbian language from cultural space, but ijekavica lyrics (as in much Bosnian NCFM) would not themselves protect songs. Indeed, Hudelist (1998a) argued that Tuđman's 'spiritual renewal' was founded on civilisational not national premises precisely because 'authentic Bosnian folk songs' (sevdalinke) had been treated identically to "orthodox newly-composed narodnjaci of Serb–Bosniak provenance'. In Yugoslavia too, claims to westernness had required the negation of 'the Balkan other self' in discourses about folk (Rasmussen 2002:318). One corollary of a Croatia without Yugoslavia was therefore a Croatia without folk.

The exclusion of narodnjaci was not just a national media concern. Similar local-level practices emerge from Naila Ceribašić's study of music played at 1986–92 Slavonian Podravina weddings, where NCFM used to be the top genre for wedding bands. They were performed less and less after 1990, especially once war broke out; bands replaced them with foreign or domestic pop/rock and the new genres of patriotic songs and neo-traditional Slavonian tamburica music. Ceribašić (1993:224–5) attributes this change to people coming to 'experience[...] those songs as a Serb product' i.e. from 'a country which

⁹⁵ Josip Ivanković from Dukati once said they had decided 'it was worth offering the Croatian audience domestic newly-composed folk music' because of 'how many records Serb singers sold in Croatia' (Stažić 1995b).

⁹⁶ Festivals 'defined the stylistic parameters' of Yugoslav pop/NCFM, and gauged music's and musicians' 'popularity' and 'legitimacy' (Rasmussen 2002:41).

had committed aggression against Croatia' and viewing them as 'a reflection of Serb hegemony and the long-term Yugoslav suppression of Croatian national consciousness'.⁹⁷ Many performers may well have been glad to express a national consciousness they considered had been suppressed, although some performers' decisions to abandon *narodnjaci* were not voluntary. The Zagreb-based nightclub singer Dragana Brkić gave them up for two years in August 1991 when a soldier on leave threatened her at gunpoint (Hudelist 1995).

Different media organisations dispensed with NCFM at different times. A May 1991 headline in *Globus's* television guide spoke of the 'cleansing' of 'narodnjaci' (NCFM songs) from HTV (Pribić 1991a),⁹⁸ but *Arena*, which had treated Serbian, Bosnian and Croatian personalities equally, left it until September (three months after Croatia's declaration of independence) to drop Serbians and Bosnians from its showbusiness news double spread. One entire double spread was devoted to the wave of new patriotic music, the theme remained patriotic during several weeks of intense fighting in Croatia, and once *Arena* resumed covering non-patriotic music its framework was suddenly Croatian, not Yugoslav. While unobtrusively, routinely signalling the extent of the nation helps retrospectively naturalise the shift from a former to a current state (Billig 1995:42), the independence process also entailed *not* signalling the sudden *non*-extent of the nation.

What Dubravka Ugrešić (1998:231) experienced as the 'confiscation of memory' – including memories of the 1980s NCFM star Lepa Brena – made ideological sense for a nation-centric ideology in a successor unit of a multi-national federation. Popular music in the 1990s operated within this discursive field, as seen in three examples concerning tamburica. The limits of cultural boundaries were tested in 1993 when a tamburica song, *Leina*, was proposed as Croatia's first independent Eurovision entry; the use of tamburica by showbusiness 'hitmakers' unsettled professional boundaries; the extent of the state's capacity to determine cultural identity was seen during HTV's largest-scale tamburica project, *Ljepom našom*. These cases demonstrate how tamburica became the subject of

⁹⁷ Ceribašić's definition of NCFM (1993:225) is based on 'music created largely in the territory of Serbia', where 'the language of those songs is Serbian (performers very rarely adapted their expressions to the Croatian language), and the lyrics often also contained expressions from socialist everyday life, which Croatia wanted to forget as soon as possible'. This does not fully account for Bosnian-produced NCFM, which often used *ijekavica*.

⁹⁸ Although TV Zagreb had never supported NCFM as whole-heartedly as TV Belgrade/Sarajevo, its tight policy must have been tightened further. One reader then wrote in saying that, besides the singers in the article, Serbian/Bosnian pop-oriented singers like Zdravko Čolić had disappeared too (*TV Best* 1991). Čolić had appeared on HTV's Sunday-afternoon show *Sastanak bez dnevnog reda* (*Unscheduled meeting*) as late as 7 April 1991.

cultural politics which, for all their disagreements, produced an ideology of civilisational westernness and national distinctiveness.

3.1.3 The *Leina* case

Although NCFM had been a target of Croatian cultural politics from the outset, the state media's *explicit* anti-NCFM campaign began in 1993 when the pop composer Rajko Dujmić submitted a neo-tamburica song, *Leina*, for consideration as Croatia's first independent Eurovision entry.⁹⁹ HRT treated Eurovision as a deliberate site of political and cultural messages about what Croatia was and was not, so that musical representations had to conform to a desired narrative of Croatian cultural identity (6.3.1). Sending tamburica might have seemed logical, but the opposite occurred: *Leina* was rejected from the shortlist altogether. An anonymous HTV juror and Dujmić both gave their viewpoints to *Globus*: the juror thought *Leina* 'did not satisfy European criteria and would not represent Croatia in the right light', contained 'too many Greek elements [...], which we wanted to avoid anyway', and what HTV actually wanted was 'an autochthonous Croatian song, containing elements from this region' (Pukanić 1993b). Dujmić replied that *Leina* had 'an authentic Croatian sound' and 'real Slavonian tamburice', and that '[n]o other people has that instrument or uses it like the Croats' (Pukanić 1993b).

Leina was one of several 1992–93 cases where pop composers used folk or tamburica motifs. *Arena* first noticed the trend in February 1993, when the composers claimed their songs were based on authentically-Croatian elements (primarily tamburica) and distinguished them from 'newly-composed music with an eastern sound' (Jasenka Houra) or 'some sort of Yu[goslav]-folk we know from before' (Dujmić) (Kruhac 1993b). HRT musical editors nonetheless met in Osijek in July 1993 and asked for the songs to be de-playlisted from radio because they were 'destroying the image of the tamburica as the Croatian national instrument' and allowing 'pop and rock performers' to use it 'for commercial reasons and personal promotion' (Španović 1993). The state entertainment-media complex of HRT and *Večernji list* had more reservations about semi-folk production than *Arena*. *VL* had not reported *Leina*'s rejection from the Eurovision selection and only joined the story after the Osijek conference. *VL* also gave the impression of HRT putting up a united front against narodnjaci, but *Arena*'s narrative was more nuanced. The local radio music editors quoted in *Arena* (from Osijek and Donji Miholac) felt dictated to by the

⁹⁹ Dujmić's songs had won the Yugoslav Eurovision selection three times (1987–89), once winning Eurovision outright. He was best known as Novi Fosili's composer-keyboardist.

Osijek commission, did not agree with it and were not intending to fully comply (Španović 1993).¹⁰⁰

Once narodnjaci had been problematised by *Leina*, they did not go away. Two editions of the HTV talk show *Latinica* in 1993 (post-*Leina*) and 1996 on narodnjaci helped set the agenda too,¹⁰¹ but *Leina* seemed to give rise to a characteristic aspect of promotional music reporting – interview-questions about how oneself or others used folk music. The trend was short-lived in *Arena*, although Danijela Martinović was asked whether Magazin's current hit *Došlo vrijeme* (*It's time*) had a 'Montenegrin melos' (Tomasović 1993).¹⁰² *VL* showbusiness interviews, however, used it regularly throughout the 1990s, and it became an increasingly ritualistic, performative question for musicians who could be construed as either belonging to or rejecting the 'eastern'/'newly-composed' melos. Performance in this sense involves 'doing one's nation-ness [...] "correctly"' within 'coercive systems of identification' (D Taylor 1997:92) such as had been exerted in Croatian public space. The nature of 'correctness' was debatable, but the underlying principle that 'nation-ness' should be ritualistically interrogated and confirmed was not to be challenged.

With musical editors and tamburaši at odds with pop producers, the *Leina* affair represented a contest over authority to claim cultural authenticity (see Bauman 1992:17). Calling orchestration Croatian was not enough, no matter how closely producers' arguments matched the official narrative of the tamburica as the authentic Croatian instrument repressed by the artificial imposition of 'eastern' NCFM. What Dujmić described as the 'beauty of the Croatian melos' (Kruhak 1993c) in *Leina* was a 'quasi-oriental rhythm' to the anonymous radio editor who told *VL* why the song could not be requested (Rožman 1993). Pop composers, broadcasting officials and tamburaši played out their rivalry by claiming and counter-claiming authenticity. In so doing, they competed for 'the power to name' (Bourdieu 1991:105) – or to mark boundaries – and illustrated the relational nature of constructing identity (see Jenkins 1996): the claim to authenticity/Croatianness needed to be *recognised* as well as made. Another potential source

¹⁰⁰ *Arena* also differed from *VL* in accepting the 'Bosnian melos' as a legitimately 'authentic' tradition and basis for folk-inspired popular music in Croatia – commenting, for instance, that two styles had developed in the early 1990s based on 'the tamburica music tradition' and 'the Bosnian melos': '[r]egardless of which authentic tradition it is based on,' both styles were as profitable as the market allowed (Kruhak 1993b).

¹⁰¹ As happened after a 2002 *Latinica* about small-scale concerts by Serbian NCFM singers (6.1.4).

¹⁰² Martinović said it was actually 'a song from Lika [in central Croatia], "based" on the traditional Croatian song "Pjevaj mi, pjevaj, sokole"'. Those who say differently don't know the Croatian ethnic melos' (Tomasović 1993). The song's video directly coded it as Likan, with band-members in traditional red-and-black Likan hats.

of rivalry – who stood to profit from tamburica’s fortunate position – was nonetheless implicit, and came even closer to the surface in controversies over commercialisation.

3.1.4 Commercialisation

The convergence of folk music with pop and rock, as during the popularisation of tamburica, tends to involve struggles over how far folk music-making standards should be compromised in adapting to pop/rock contexts. The 1960s US controversies over electrification, exemplified by the dispute between Pete Seeger and Bob Dylan when Dylan appeared with an electrified band at the Newport Folk Festival (Mitchell 2007:136), were echoed in Yugoslav NCFM musicians’ debates in the 1970s–1980s over whether electric guitars, synthesisers and keyboards were acceptably ‘folk’; tamburica underwent this in the 1990s. Interestingly, both the Yugoslav and Croatian folk-pop scenes often invoked the idea of ‘Nashville’ (see Rasmussen 2002:76–8). The key tamburica festival in Požega, Golden Strings of Slavonia, was sympathetically cast as the Croatian answer to Nashville by *V/L*, which printed Požega press-releases as straight editorial.

The Požega organiser, Veljko Škorvaga, had relaunched it in 1992 to ‘create new Croatian music’ as ‘a substitute [nadomjestak] for folk [narodnu] music, especially the newly-composed music we were bombarded with for years’. Noting that ‘many ensembles actually made a living from that music’ – bearing out Ceribašić’s wedding observations – Škorvaga warned of ‘a danger such a melos might return’, so ‘want[ed] many songs to be created at the festival which will taste Croatian’ (Topić 1992). Škorvaga therefore explicitly saw tamburica as a functional replacement for NCFM. His intentions were exemplified by the five-piece tamburica group *Gazde*, which formed in 1993 and performed at Požega annually. *Gazde* dressed differently from previous neo-tamburica bands (leather jackets/trousers and embroidered Western shirts rather than traditional white shirts and ducat waistcoats), included urban as well as rural images in their lyrics (e.g. trams),¹⁰³ and held an annual December concert in one of Zagreb’s main pop venues, Dom sportova. Their metropolitan, non-Slavonian origin was often emphasised in their extensive promotion, perhaps to reinforce the impression of neo-tamburica as relevant to young Zagreb listeners. Arguably, *Gazde* were also Croatia’s nearest equivalent to the internationally-popular boy-band model, which otherwise did not exist in Croatia (besides a late-1990s group called *Sunset Crew*, who had little success and quickly vanished).

¹⁰³ Compare the images of urban life commenting positively on social change in some Yugoslav NCFM (Čolović 1985:154–5).

Gazde's presentation as tamburica 'rockers' did not always succeed. At the height of their fame they supported a Led Zeppelin concert in Zagreb, but were roundly booed by concert-goers, who found the combination absurd. Dunja Rihtman-Auguštin commented that the mainly middle-aged audience had grown up with Led Zeppelin when the band:

symbolised the move away from "Stalinist culture", [and] belonging to modern Europe [...] It was above all a protest by people who want to be Europeans, who think in a cosmopolitan way, like their contemporaries in France, Germany and the US, and not in a narrowly nationalist way. At that concert they were protesting against what Gazde symbolise, i.e. tamburica as a false symbol of the aggressive Croatian national myth (Pleše 1998).

Here, disapproval of Gazde and the tamburica revival belonged to a larger discursive toolkit which opposed a 'collectively sanctioned concept' of 'culture' to 'the "non-culture" of primitive nationalism' (Jansen 2005a:117)¹⁰⁴ – as could be said for the general rock/folk opposition in all the ex-Yugoslav states (3.3). By understanding rock as something purely musical, the semi-folk singer Zlatko Pejaković could honestly say that 'I still haven't lost that rock [thing]' when his guitarist played a solo (Šćepanović 1993) and Tonči Huljić could claim he had responded to the popularity of the alternative-rock band Majke by re-arranging the beginning of a Rolling Stones song for the introduction of Magazin's *Gutljaj vina* (*A swig of wine*) (Cigoj 1999b). This was not possible if 'rock' and 'folk' were socially constructed: compare the reaction of Serbian 'rock' adherents to a Serbian folk cover of the Stones' *Paint it black* (Gordy 1999:138–40).

The tamburica movement's third phase – its eventual convergence with mainstream pop – was exemplified by the next leading tamburica band, Baruni. They were managed by a pop-rock musician, Miroslav Rus, and transformed from a covers band called Hrvatski baruni (Croatian Barons) wearing standard tamburica dress into a group performing original material and wearing casual clothes (via a phase of black frock-coats). *Arena* described their new look as 'look[ing] more like the [US boy-band] Backstreet Boys than lads with tamburice' (Kronast 1997). Baruni had benefited from political and music-industry patronage to some degree: the prime minister Nikola Valentić had taken them to a Danubian folklore display in Romania, they regularly played for Tuđman at New Year, their early manager Nenad Breka called them 'a real Government band' and the late Tomislav Ivčić had looked out for them (Stažić 1995a). Under Rus, Baruni gradually introduced

¹⁰⁴ Likewise, one liberal journalist described a Stones audience in Zagreb as 'signifying resistance to the internal Croatian Balkans which has nested in the very heart of the Croatian metropolis in the name of national cleansing' and subjected the capital to folk music and the domestic-only Narodni radio (Babić 1998).

percussion, then electric guitar. By 1997 they preferred to call themselves 'a band with a tambura' not 'a tambura band', and claimed that percussion made them more marketable in Dalmatia, which otherwise 'doesn't go for tamburica because they've got their own mandolin and [...] klapa singing' (Pacek 1997). They first used electric guitar in 1998 for their World Cup anthem *Neka pati koga smeta* (*Tough luck if you're bothered*), making it even more questionable whether they should be described as tamburaši (Lacko 1998).

Rus fulfilled the role in Croatian folk music that Milić Vukašinović (ex-Bijelo Dugme) had performed for Yugoslav NCFM when composing for the Bosnian sevdah singer Hanka Paldum (see Rasmussen 2002:103–5). By removing the highest- and lowest-pitched instruments (prim and kontrabas) from the standard tamburica ensemble and introducing a guitar, Rus claimed to have pioneered 'a new movement in Croatian pop music which contains elements of folk, above all through the sound of the tambura' (Goleš 1997). He applied pop experience to a folk product and came into conflict with 'traditionalists' and their vested interests in keeping things the same. The conflict peaked before the 1999 Porin awards, when Porin's tamburica committee (Škorvaga, Šljivac, Leopold and another tamburaš, Željko Barba) classified Baruni as pop instead because they used percussion (Oremović 1999). However, *Arena* noticed that another percussion-using tamburica band, Bekrije (whom Barba managed), had stayed in tamburica, and suggested that Barba had moved Baruni to avoid competition with Bekrije (Kruhac 1999). Ironically, the tamburica category had only been created in 1997 to resolve another controversy over whether the many new tamburica groups were crowding Dalmatian klapas out of folk (Oremović 1997b).

The anti-commercialisation lobby included Leopold, who warned against potential 'hybrids' (Topić 1996), and Kićo Slabinac. Slabinac himself had crossed from rock-and-roll into tamburica in the 1970s, but now stood for an older generation of tamburaši. Older professionals' dissent was partly contained by revising Požega in 1998 to include another night for songs with a 'more contemporary approach' to 'melody, harmony and instrumentation' (Topić 1998) – ring-fencing the final and a full set of prizes for more traditional tamburaši.¹⁰⁵ Old-fashioned light-entertainment performers also had reason to feel threatened by pop-tamburica, especially if they were Dalmatian: Đani Maršan worried that 'we [might] soon completely throw the piano out of zabavna music and replace it with tamburica' (Omanović 1993). The 1990s commercialisation, electrification, urbanification

¹⁰⁵ This did not last long: by 2001 the pop-tamburica night became 'song and wine night' mainly including performers who never usually sang tamburica songs, and Gazde were re-classified as tamburica.

and diffusion of tamburica echoed 1970s–1980s developments in NCFM, but their ideological uses differed. NCFM's all-Yugoslav character largely derived from its widespread geographical popularity, rather than any constructions of a particular region's music as pan-Yugoslav – even though there were attempts to define 'Yugoslav song' through NCFM's syncretism (Rasmussen 2002:63–4). 1990s tamburica had a much more direct ideological status and *was* consistently promoted as an expression of national Croatian character, which originated from a particular region but deferred to the primacy of the nation.

3.1.5 *Lijepom našom*

HRTV's weekly folklore programme *Lijepom našom* ([*Around*] *our beautiful [homeland]*), the entertainment department's most expensive show (Cigoj 2000b), dominated the schedule for up to 90 minutes most Fridays in 1996–99. HRTV already served as an arbiter of musical production by broadcasting and sponsoring pop and tamburica festivals under conditions which the music and entertainment department extensive control over content (Rožman 1994a). *LN* was a more direct intervention, where tamburica and pop groups performed alongside local folklore groups in a different county every week (the 1997/98 *LN* also included a folk-costume competition sending winners from each county to a final in Vukovar). Half of each edition was meant to feature the host county's own music, but the rationale of its presenter Branko Uvodić that tamburica was 'the most widely-spread Croatian folk [narodni] instrument' played 'in all parts of Croatia' (Radović 1996) meant that tamburica could appear anywhere, even on the coast – and increasingly did. If Požega was Croatia's Nashville, *LN* was Croatia's Grand Ol' Opry (see Peterson 1997) – a site of convergence between folk traditions and commercial entertainment which cast ideas of authenticity into crisis even as it staged them.¹⁰⁶

However, *LN* also indicated the extent of the state's (or Tuđman's) hand in cultural politics. Unusually, it was developed outside the usual entertainment-department framework by Rikard Gumzej, HDZ's 1989–92 marketing secretary who had been appointed a special adviser to HRT's director Ivica Mudrinić.¹⁰⁷ A new entertainment editor, Mario Sedmak, found that Gumzej and Uvodić had already begun working on it when he started his job (Cigoj 1997). As suggested by *LN*'s title, echoing the national anthem, its symbolic aim was to aggregate each locality's character into the broader

¹⁰⁶ Rasmussen (2002:190) applies Peterson's thoughts on country-music authenticity to NCFM.

¹⁰⁷ *Globus* alleged Gumzej was working on HDZ's election campaign even while employed by HRT (Vuković 1996). His interest in folklore went back to his fashion work during the Croatian Spring, when he claimed to have been the first designer to use Croatian folk motifs (Pašić 1994).

homeland. By 1998–99 this had developed into a focus on the cultural nation regardless of state borders, with editions broadcast from Friedrichshafen (at a Catholic mission), Sydney, Široki Brijeg (commemorating the death of defence minister Gojko Šušak), Kiseljak and Vienna. Its image of distinctive regions feeding into the overarching nation challenged Istrian regionalists' implicit idea that national identity need not always be primary,¹⁰⁸ which directly undermined Tuđman's nation-centrism (see Bellamy 2003:128; Ashbrook 2005). Uvodić once made this challenge explicit when he described *LN* as 'reduc[ing] the sort of local-patriot tensions between counties which are disagreeing about representation in national, business and even entertainment projects' (Ivančić 1997a).¹⁰⁹

LN incorporated itself into the state commemorative calendar by absorbing musical events on national days (a HTV speciality ever since the wartime band-aids – and a Yugoslav practice before that). 1997's Statehood Day show came from the central military parade at Jarun, which played a major role in Tuđman's iconography (Rihtman-Auguštin 2000:257–64). In 1998, the first Statehood Day after UNTAES handed over eastern Slavonia, *LN* was broadcast from the border-town of Ilok, all the better to symbolise full reintegration (Bebek 1998a; see 2.4.2); the Oluja anniversary show came from Knin, starting with *Od stoljeća sedmog* (Bebek 1998b). Uvodić's plans to stage *LN* in Vukovar and Beli Manastir (both in eastern Slavonia) 'to show that Our Beautiful [Homeland] is where it's always been' (Radović 1996) were not technically or politically possible under UNTAES, and those editions were filmed in January/April 1999. *LN* was clearly in line with more extensive political efforts to aignal the nation's extent.

Another ideological message of *LN* was the authenticity, timelessness and purity of rural culture. Uvodić situated it within a campaign 'to safeguard this country's national, ethnological identity' which had found itself 'endangered' due to lack of interest in traditional costumes. He added that 'younger girls have no interest in handicraft' (Ivančić 1997a) but did not single out men – narrating Croatia's cultural crisis through symbolism which equated women with the nation's land (see Mostov 2000:90). Uvodić justified the show's folk-culture focus by claiming that:

Almost 90 percent of us are of peasant [seljačkog] origin. Croatia is that sort of country because of its history. You can be born in the

¹⁰⁸ This is not to suggest *LN* was devised specifically to undermine Istrian regionalism. Indeed, Ivo Žanić has interpreted it as an instrument of HDZ policy in Bosnia–Herzegovina (personal communication, 16 March 2007). OSCE had been critical of HTV's Bosnian presence in general (e.g. the case of election advertising) and interpreted it as the Croatian state violating the spirit of Dayton by exerting undue influence over Herzegovina.

¹⁰⁹ 'Entertainment projects': *Sedma noć* (2.1.2)?

city, but two or three generations back you're of peasant origin.
(Ivančić 1997a)

Uvodić's claim that nearly all Croats/Croatians had 'peasant origins' echoed Tuđman's idea of the folk as the basis of the Croatian people, which itself drew on Stjepan Radić's location of the 'authentic [Croatian] nation' in peasant culture and life.

LN also foregrounded national history itself. Shows often began with some historical contextualisation, such as the recital of Ivan Gundulić's poem 'Oda slobodi' ('Ode to freedom') – accompanied by the omnipresent tamburica – opening one Dubrovnik edition. Once *Arena* became involved with LN in 1997–98, its on-the-spot reports from each taping described the musicians and the costume-competition winners but also historicised the location, e.g. describing Slatina's reinhabiting by Croats from western Croatia and Bosnia after 'the expulsion of the Turks in the 17th century' had left it 'deserted and almost empty' (Šćavina 1997b). Sometimes, however, there was not enough history, or the wrong sort: one *Arena* reader complained a Senj edition had subsumed the Littoral into Lika and ignored Senj's history of Uskoks, printers and early secondary schools (Hapčo 1998).

LN's visual concept was echoed in other HTV music projects in 1996, such as Dora (the annual Eurovision selection. Ksenija Urličić (1996) described the Dora logo, a female figure, as containing 'lacework from Pag, [it] reminds [one] of Konavle folk costume's simple beauty, but also the splendour of the "Slavonian queens"' – as syncretic as the average LN – plus 'golden stars on her crown' as 'a clear signpost towards Europe'.¹¹⁰ Three annual beauty-pageants were also produced as pop extravaganzas with many musical interludes (and more arguments about HTV favouritism).¹¹¹ Davor Butković's commentary on a ballet performed to Jakov Gotovac's Dinaric opera *Ero s onoga svijeta* during Miss Croatia 1996 touched on the same ideology behind LN: 'a new entirely politically-inspired style' in arts and entertainment which sought legitimacy in emphasising its nationalness, or rather a simplified version of the state narrative which demanded 'proof of years-old Croatian origin' for everything. He added that the frame aimed to present participants as 'bold, Catholic-raised patriots' who respected 'traditional values' and to unite Croatia with Herzegovina and the diaspora – maybe even effecting some kind of Ustaša–Partisan reconciliation (Butković 1996). A liberal journalist, Butković was probably not LN's target audience, but LN also met with more surprising scepticism from *Nedjeljna Dalmacija*, a strong supporter of the state since its 1993 takeover. It gave a sympathetic ear

¹¹⁰ Official Yugoslav folklore also had politically-directed syncretic qualities (Maners 2008).

¹¹¹ In 1992 Urličić called Miss Croatia a 'chance to present Croatia through beauty, in a different light to pictures of blood and horror' (Haznadar 1998).

to tamburica gatekeepers like Zdravko Šljivac and Miroslav Rus, but *LN* appeared to be a step too far. In 1998 *ND*'s celebrity television column carried week after week of complaints about *LN* over-emphasising tamburica, particularly after a June 1998 edition from Trogir (near Split) still promoted tamburica at the expense of local klapa and mandolin traditions (Konsa 1998). Only Doris Dragović and Minea, both managed by Tonči Huljić, had anything positive to say about the show.

Sharon Fisher sees the late 1990s as the time of HDZ's 'drive against the "Other"' because it had not won the desired two-thirds majority in the October 1995 elections enabling it to change the constitution (Fisher 2006:18). This political orientation makes *LN* all the more important in the light of its connection to Tuđman (through Gumzej) and the simultaneous extension of informal presidential control over news elsewhere at HRT. Gumzej's involvement suggests that *LN* was seen at a high level as political marketing. Urličić's view of entertainment as a branch of state politics was a precondition for *LN*, but both the Urličić approach and *LN* may also have drawn from the Yugoslav instrumentalisation of entertainment (e.g. Army Day festivals and frequent 'playing for Tito'). However, *LN*'s reception also illustrates another of Fisher's arguments – that HDZ's ideology became ineffective when it failed to match individuals' lived experience. Nation-centric rhetoric, for instance, sat uneasily with the sight of Tuđman's associates enriching themselves through privatisation while condemning employees to economic uncertainty (Bellamy 2003:110–1; Fisher 2006:83–8). *ND*'s reaction, moreover, indicated that 'state ideology' was not monolithic: *LN* and *ND* were both produced by state institutions, but came to different conclusions about Croatian cultural identity. The music industry's view of cultural identity was hardly monolithic either, and several musical directions emerged during the 1990s which depended on implicit narratives of identity. The dance movement, Istrian-dialect pop-rock, the 'ethno' scene and the development of 'Croatian narodnjaci' all entailed the articulation and contestation of identity-narratives about popular music.

3.2 Contested musical narratives

3.2.1 The dance movement

The 1993–96 'dance' trend represented another attempt by different power-bases to determine a national style of popular music. Croatian dance drew on German/Italian house music to a debatable extent, and often added English-language raps to Croatian-

language lyrics; it was a mainstream chart music, not a minority taste-culture.¹¹² Dance was associated with three particular managers: Zoran Škugor, Vladimir Mihaljek and Senad Galijašević, a Bosniak ex-folk singer who adopted a 'techno' image and used the stage name Senna M.¹¹³ Mihaljek was probably the early 1990s' best-connected music producer after co-organising Croatian Music Aid (2.1.4). There is no evidence of dance being a state-driven ideological project, but CMA's closeness to television editors and the press left Mihaljek in a favourable position to promote other ventures later. Dance promotion involved the same ethno-cultural discourses surrounding tamburica, i.e. Croatia having a different, European cultural heritage from Yugoslavia's. Mihaljek claimed that he had started working with young dance singers when 'there dominated so-called schlager music of the eastern type, with pathetic lyrics, and I was afraid that music would flood our scene' (Tomeković-Aralica and Palenka 1994).

The most popular dance-era album was ET's *Second to none*, which sold 51,500 copies in 1995 (Hudelist 1995) – and for hip-hop fans marked a formerly alternative group's selling-out to the mainstream (Perasović 2001:301). Usually, however, dance acts struggled to sell more than a few thousand albums. The genre was oriented towards radio/television singles, so that once performers had accumulated an album's worth of songs the singles were already available on their producers' compilations (Hudelist 1995). Indeed, singles themselves existed to attract audiences to nightclub performances, the site of most mid-1990s musical activity when only the most successful acts profited from solo concerts.¹¹⁴ Dance performers, who had a few dancers and a pre-recorded backing-track, were much cheaper to tour and hire than musicians who required live bands. Other musicians complained throughout the 1990s about 'playback' singing and an industry of starlets who could not sing live, exacerbated by record labels recording albums for anyone who could pay.¹¹⁵

Darko Hudelist's 1995 state-of-the-industry report dedicated several pages to dance and its rhetorical imperative to liberate Croatian popular culture from eastern/Serbian influences and bring it closer to Europe and the west. Embarrassingly for dance

¹¹² Unlike UK 'dance' (trance/rave/hardcore). See Thornton 1995.

¹¹³ Boško Landeka (a neo-Ustaša singer/bodyguard) and Anto Baković (a pro-life activist) both attacked Galijašević's Muslim ethnicity in 1994–95 (Roksandić 1994; Zima 1995).

¹¹⁴ Digital-era global majors have since considered similar loss-leader tactics (Kretschmer et al. 2001).

¹¹⁵ Payola, reportedly endemic, was rarely spoken of until a 1998–99 musicians' union campaign against Urličić. One of the few to go on record earlier was Željko Miloš from the minor label Euroton, who said that it cost 100 DM to place a song in local radio charts and 2,000 DM to place it on *Jel' me netko tražio?*; with 40,000 DM, he claimed, he could make anybody a star in six months (Hudelist 1995). All these problems – playback, starlets and corruption – also affected Russian popular music during the birth of a post-socialist music industry (MacFadyen 2002a).

producers, Hudelist argued that dance had actually ‘laid the foundations for a perhaps unprecedented renaissance of newly-composed folk music’ instead. He compared Mihaljek’s ensemble dance tours to PGP-RTB’s 1980s tours (headlined by Lepa Brena) and, more seriously, claimed that Croatian dance had actually *rejected* Western melody and rhythm, retaining only Western packaging: the appearance and lyrics of female dance singers had ‘begun to imitate singers of Serbian newly-composed folk songs’, meaning that dance was ‘more inclined towards east than west’ and ‘[w]here it really lives is actually the Balkans’ (Hudelist 1995).¹¹⁶ The alternative Serbian cultural commentator Petar Luković (1996) saw no differences between the two genres either, and the music critic Ilko Čulić (1995b) compared Croatian dance with the simultaneous development of ‘turbo-folk’ when he reviewed Ivana Banfić’s dance album *Mala škola ABC* (*Little ABC school*) and commented that ‘such things are highly sought after in the east, especially in Serbia’ (and Bulgaria) where they were called turbo-folk: ‘Here it is still called dance, but perhaps we’re not far away from fusion’. Banfić’s album had included the notorious *Šumica* (*Little forest*) with a chorus about swimming naked in the sea (controversial enough for her to release a sequel the next summer).¹¹⁷

Female singers seemed to offset their provocative sexuality by accessorising revealing clothing with a crucifix. The more risqué the former, the larger the latter – as if making their sexuality respectable in a gendered nation where individual women’s threatening sexuality must be harnessed to the national need for reproduction (see Mostov 2000). The prominent female crucifix was not the only common ground between Croatian dance and Serbian turbofolk. Both genres were preoccupied with conspicuous consumption, fast cars and other markers of the newly-enriched semi-criminal elite (Kronja 2001:30–1).¹¹⁸ ET’s 1996 video *Sve bih dala da znam* (*I’d give everything to know*) cast the male band-members as 1920s gangsters and their lead singer Vanna as their moll, and the vocalist of the short-lived dance duo Spen d.d. appeared in one photo-shoot with a pistol tucked into her jeans (Pišek 1996). Many dance careers did not outlast 1996, although some singers – Vanna, Banfić, Tony Cetinski, and Nina Badrić – matured into solid pop-rock chart attractions. Dance

¹¹⁶ Indeed, the Hudelist report *itself* arguably brought pop-folk into the spotlight (Pettan 2007:370).

¹¹⁷ Baković’s attack on Galijašević and ‘Satanic’ dance songs actually started with *Šumica*, although Banfić and Galijašević were unconnected. *Šumica*’s composer Borivoj Vincetić called the row unfair because at Zagrebfest 1993 Banfić had sung a song ‘dedicated to a fallen Croatian soldier. I believe people will remember she performed then in a white wedding-dress’ (Lesinger 1995a).

¹¹⁸ A musical genre called ‘dance’ also emerged in Serbia under Marija Milošević’s sponsorship and featured during Mira Marković’s 1996 election campaign (Kronja 2001:69–70). ET’s Serbian popularity in Serbia may well have stimulated dance there – suggesting, if so, that Croatian/Serbian pop even remained interdependent when cultural ties had supposedly been severed. Rasmussen (2007) also sees similarities between dance and turbofolk.

itself became eclipsed by a folk-pop crossover, but for all its apparent cheapness and brevity appears to have been one of the decade's best-remembered musical directions.

3.2.2 'Ča-val' and Istria

Besides dance, the mid-1990s' other pop phenomenon was Alen Vitasović, a vocalist who sang in Istrian dialect (čakavica). Vitasović had worked for Radio Pula and became famous in 1994 through pop festivals: he participated in (and frequently won) all the major 1994–1996 Dalmatian festivals, and his first hit was the winner of the inaugural Pula Arenafest in 1994. His Italian-style music in dialect built on the rock bands Gustafi and Šajeta, who had pioneered dialect singing inside Istria. HRT and *Večernji list* both took great interest in Vitasović, and several other Istrian-dialect singers briefly followed him. Sanja Kalapoš (2002:93–6) describes the 'ča-val' ('ča-wave') inside Istria as an expression of regional identity, an instance of 'glocalisation' (global musical forms, local dialect), and a political commentary on centralist linguistic policy. Its extra-Istrian importance is not systematically covered, although she argues that the state media's intensive promotion of Istrian-dialect music represented a symbolic way 'to incorporate Istria (that *dangerous region inclined to separatism*) into the entirety of the Croatian state' (Kalapoš 2002:98, emphasis original). Examining Vitasović's promotion suggests her conclusion could be taken further: the construction of the Vitasović phenomenon aimed to contain a potentially subversive cultural development by privileging its most politically unthreatening manifestation.

If '1995 was the year of Alen Vitasović' (Kalapoš 2002:55), it was also the year of Tuđman's wide-ranging campaign against Istrian regionalists. The regionalist Istrian Democratic Assembly (IDS) promoted a common narrative of Istrian identity as 'more democratic' than HDZ's national narrative and 'akin to Western European identities and mentalities', seeing Tuđman's nationalism as 'Balkan' by comparison (Ashbrook 2005:465). Many Istrians, pro-IDS or not, spoke of 'multiconfessionalism', 'multiculturality', 'multilingualism' and 'tolerance' as Istrian values (Ashbrook 2005:476), implicitly or explicitly challenging HDZ's nationalising emphasis. The conflict of narratives undermined HDZ's idea of a homogenous ethnic community primarily loyal to the nation, and arguably even 'articulated the most coherent counter-narrative' to 1990s nationalism (Bellamy 2003:130–1). HDZ therefore treated IDS as an internal enemy accused of endangering national unity (Uzelac 1998:460).

As per Urličić's concept of entertainment in support of state ideology, an attempt to connect Istria to the nation through state-backed popular music had already been made in

1993: an 'Istria Band Aid', organised by Zrinko Tutić, sang the folk-song *Krasna zemljo Istro mila* (*Dear pretty land of Istria*) in a HDZ broadcast. HDZ took out a full-page *Večernji list* advertisement for Tutić to say the project showed 'that we love that Istria terribly [...] and that we can function only as an inseparable body [neodvojivo tkivo]. I'm convinced that pan-Croatian interest is expressed through the intentions of the ruling party HDZ'. He distinguished it from the Yugoslav regime's political assemblages of singers by saying that, as with his Hrvatski Band Aid, 'it's about individuals, not the collectives well-known from earlier regimes' (*Večernji list* 1993). Istria thereafter received substantial attention from HTV's musical department.¹¹⁹ The final edition of *Sedma noć* (2.1.2) in July 1995 came from the Pula Arena, where Urličić remembered 12,000 people singing along 'in the heart of Croatian Istria' (Pukanić 1995) – compare how *Lijepom našom* climaxed in Vukovar during extensive state efforts to promote the symbolic integration of eastern Slavonia's symbolic integration. Pula Arenafest launched with HTV sponsorship in 1994, adding an Istrian festival to a largely Dalmatian calendar. In light of these projects, Vitasović's self-presentation suggests that the Vitasović project too was mainly directed *outside* Istria and reflected the emphasis on expressing various regional identities *within* the framework of the state.

HDZ's anti-regionalist campaign may itself have encouraged further expressions of Istrian regional identity, including ča-val (Uzelac 1998:461). Vitasović was connected to ča-val through his linguistic choice and his songwriter Livio Morosin (from Gustafi). However, he diverged from the movement as his fame grew. Gustafi's leader Edo Maružin in 1999 even disowned 'fatherhood' of Vitasović, explaining him away as 'a combination of inspiration and the political moment' (Morić 1999). By taking part in HDZ's 1995 election campaign, Vitasović permanently damaged his status within Istria (Kalapoš 2002:58). His public presentation emphasising his home village Orbanici¹²⁰ (e.g. *Arena* featured him starting the annual village donkey-race (Konestra 1996)) was closer to the average-family-man persona of showbusiness-folk singers such as Serbia's Miroslav Ilić (see Stojanović 1988) or Croatia's Mišo Kovač than Šajeta's or Gustafi's politically-engaged worldviews.

Vitasović described his music and dialect as 'the most sincere way for me to represent my region, town or village to a broad public', with 'no connection with politics' (Tadić 1994). He also spoke out against Croatian singers possibly performing in Serbia and deferred moral judgement to those who 'have felt the terrors of this war' (Jurić 1995a);

¹¹⁹ And from HDZ: before the 1995 election HDZ staged concerts twice a day in each Istrian municipality (Jurić 1995b).

¹²⁰ Perhaps the most famous village in Croatian showbusiness besides Thompson's Čavoglave.

meanwhile, Šajeta's Dražen Turina spoke out against Serbian musicians' invisibility, lobbied for Đorđe Balašević and Rambo Amadeus to perform in Croatia (6.1.4), and even became the first musician to sing in ekavica on Croatian television when he performed a Balašević song on *Latinica* in 1997 (Pogutz 1997). If ča-val was to be popular – which perhaps owed as much to its pop-rock qualities in a dance- and tamburica-dominated environment as to its linguistic character – better for the state that it be personified by a Vitasović, not a Šajeta.

Tony Cetinski from Rovinj, another Istrian singer who then placed Croatia above Istria in his public presentation, broke through as a dance singer concurrently with Vitasović. Cetinski sang in standard Croatian, so Kalapoš does not discuss him; he nonetheless contributed to the same atmosphere as Vitasović with statements like 'Many say that Istrians declare themselves primarily as Istrians, and only then as Croats. I can speak only in my own name: I'm a Croat, and Istria is part of Croatia!' (Jelinić 1996). Cetinski's 1997 army service was widely publicised (as with sportsmen), and his uniformed appearance in a HDZ advertisement prompted a Constitutional Court ruling that HDZ had unfairly appropriated the army for political ends (Senjković 2002:153). After the mid-1990s, however, Cetinski had no involvement with politicised showbusiness. Even after Tuđman, Vitasović did: he represented Istria on Thompson's Croatian-integralist *Lijepa li si* (2000), alongside singers standing for other Croatian/Herzegovinan regions,¹²¹ and his 2002 Dora song *Ja sam Istrijan (I'm an Istrian)* took the same line as his 1990s interviews: 'Buongiorno, dobar vam dan/ja pišen se Istrijan/ma mirno morete spat'/aš nisan manje Hrvat'.¹²²

3.2.3 'Ethno' and 'narodnjaci' in Međimurje and Turopolje

In 1995–99 several younger folk musicians revisited folk music from Međimurje (on the Hungarian border) and other regions, taking a neo-aesthetic approach and striving to rescue folk from showbusiness. The liner notes to their 1998 compilation *Devedesete etno (90s ethno)* called it a direct response to the official promotion of commercialised tamburica (Horvat 1998). Showbusiness nonetheless strove to rescue folk music from the folk musicians instead: the musicians' ethno festival moved from Salona to Neum (Herzegovina), taking on a more commercial character, and the musicians (e.g. Lidiya Bajuk, Mojmir Novaković) ultimately split with their promoters altogether. The two camps fiercely contested the power to set the boundaries of authenticity, ethno and folk. Bajuk

¹²¹ At Thompson's 2002 concert (4.1.3), Vitasović was the only *LLS* singer wearing white not black (a colour with far-right associations) – although he said that was just to honour Hajduk Split, who owned the stadium (Žužić 2003).

¹²² 'Buongiorno, hello/I sign myself as Istrian/but sleep easy/I'm no less a Croat'.

said openly that Neum 1998's presentation of 'authentic [izvorna] Croatian music' was 'unacceptable' (Skender 1998), but *Večernji list*, which supported Neum, described it as satisfying the audience's need to celebrate their origins without Salona's use of 'Australian and African instruments' or 'shamanistic mystification of land, water and sun' (Vukelić and Morić 1999). Showbusiness performers who claimed their own music drew on Međimurje (e.g. Vladinir Kočiš-Zec or the TV presenter Ivana Plechinger) were also galling to the Salona group, since they contravened the idea of 'ethno' as the result of study which should inform one's entire practice. HTV attempted to set its own limits on 'folk' through 1997–98's *Etnokajda* (a mix of ethnomusicology and pop crossover): however edifying its intentions, within months it was simply held up as 'repeating [...] the most problematic aspects of the Neum ethno-festival' (Glavan 1997b).¹²³

The ethno movement had two lasting consequences: the construction of a space for authentic folk music with a contemporary outlook, inspired by and contributing to the 'world music' circuit and academic ethnomusicology, and (much more accidentally) Thompson's comeback after he performed at Neum in 1998 singing about an emigrant's nostalgia for his native Dinaric village. Ethno as a folklore-based popular music which 'happily avoided the weaknesses' of NCFM (Čolović 2006:5) was a valuable category in cultural politics precisely because it had been constructed against an often-stigmatised symbol. Categorising power was first assumed by a small circle of musicians whose privileged expert position was based on ethnomusicology and research, but they were not numerous or institutionally powerful enough to control the category. An 'ethno' label was meanwhile attractive to other musicians because the claim (if accepted) would automatically distance them from more problematic associations with 'narodnjaci'/'folk'.

Unlike the Međimurje/ethno movement, so-called 'Croatian/Catholic narodnjaci' from Turropolje/Zagorje were not taken up nationally – except as a sensationalised current-affairs problem, although *Arena* (with its small-town readership) was more sympathetic. This scene had less need for national promotion because it was oriented towards small-scale live performance, which used recordings for advertising future performances rather than making money, and major record labels ignored it. Its songs were characterised by the absence of accordions, then the decisive boundary symbol in classifying Croatian music against NCFM.¹²⁴ Sometimes accordionists might try to sound different by playing more softly, but usually 'some "verified" Croatian instrument, like the "Zagorje violin"' was used

¹²³ See Piškor 2006:188–91 on the Salona discourse.

¹²⁴ NCFM producers themselves had viewed the accordion as what coded a song as NCFM (Rasmussen 2002:31).

instead (Hudelst 1998a). ‘Croatian narodnjaci’, like tamburica, thus compensated for local-level resistance to NCFM.

Many venues with live folk music had closed on the outbreak of war; when re-opening afterwards they hired Zagorje/Turopolje musicians, (Bosniak or Croat) musicians from Bosnia, or both. Folk club openings even increased in Slavonia, although the region had been occupied and a nation-centric viewpoint might have expected it to reject ‘eastern’ folk.¹²⁵ Performers did not object to all Serbian songs on principle, but negotiated between political judgements and artistic criteria. Songs by one Serbian, Ceca Ražnatović, were particularly problematic because in 1995 she had married the Serb paramilitary Željko Ražnatović-Arkan.¹²⁶ However, Serbians’ songs were routinely translated into Croatian/ijekavica by replacing a particular vowel. Radio Velika Gorica’s narodnjaci request-show creatively overcame linguistic exclusion by employing live vocalists (including Brkić) to sing Serbian songs in ijekavica. The ijekavica principle could have absurd results in Zagorje, where the local dialect legitimately used ‘e’ not ‘ije’: hence the urban myth that a famous Zagorje folk-song, *Lepo ti je Zagorje zelene* (*Green Zagorje’s beautiful*), had ended up as ‘Lijepo...’ (Sabalić 1995). Another frequent story involved an intolerant audience-member berating performers for playing something nationally unacceptable and going on to request something famously Serbian.¹²⁷ Its apparent subtext was that performers knew better than their audience what was and was not Serbian/other. Seemingly-blurred boundaries were resolved in folk clubs’ media coverage, which continually included performers and bar-owners emphasising their Croatianness and wartime loyalty.¹²⁸ To the ‘Croatian narodnjaci’ movement, folk was acceptable – maybe even an economic necessity – but ethno-political ambiguity was not.

¹²⁵ One Slavonian schoolteacher told me in 2007 that many people around his town (especially villagers) listened to narodnjaci, including people who called themselves ‘extreme Croats’/‘Ustaše’. When I asked whether the music’s Serbian origin bothered them, he commented ‘apparently not’ but added that several people had once been shot dead in Osijek just for listening to Serbian narodnjaci – and that things had changed in the last seven or eight years.

¹²⁶ Dragica Brkić happily performed Ražnatović’s ‘sexy, not fratricidal’ songs anyway, but drew the line at music by the Bosnian Serb singer Neda Ukraden (6.2.2) because Ukraden ‘had shown her true face well before the Serbian aggression against Croatia’ (Mikac 1996).

¹²⁷ It apparently happened to Jahi, Zdenko Nikšić and even Dukati (Naprt 1998b; Sabalić 1995; Šimunović 1998b).

¹²⁸ Vladimir Škarec-Škaro had been a Croatian colonel and stated: ‘I sing in ijekavica and that’s an unambiguous sign I’m a democrat and a Croat’ (Jelinić and Pahlić 2000); a Đakovačka Satnica club-owner had belonged to 204 Brigade (which fought to defend Vukovar) and painted its insignia by the entrance (Miličević 1998). One of southern Zagreb’s first folk clubs was named Oluja 95 after the operation which ended the war (Hudelst 1995).

3.3 Symbolic value-judgements

During the 1990s struggles over Croatian music, popular music became a symbolic resource for constructing and narrating various identities. Approving or disapproving of certain styles of music, performer or song could entail a claim to identity by identifying oneself and classifying others according to the values, lifestyles and worldviews that music supposedly symbolised. This was nothing new in ex-Yugoslav cultural politics: 1980s adolescents who identified with punk or trendy (*šminkeri*) taste-communities (largely communicated through music/dress) had also identified the musical/stylistic aspects of folk as an opposite from which they distanced themselves (Prica 1991:83). Folk's 1980s social connotations involved recent migrants to big cities maintaining aspects of their previous village lifestyles rather than adapting to city ways, and the semi-rural practices which appeared to threaten 'the normal life of long-term city-dwellers' produced 'urban resentment' (Jansen 2005a:118-9). The argument that NCFM helped its consumers overcome their discomfort with urban life by perpetuating a traditional 'structure of thought and feeling' (Dragićević-Šešić 1994:57) gives some sense of what was at stake. Eric Gordy (1999:136) thus calls the rock/folk opposition a 'sociologically constructed category' derived from these other oppositions.

This was not a solely ex-Yugoslav dynamic, but a local inflection of Bourdieu's 'distinction' process with which judgements about class – or other characteristics like race (Binder 1993) or ethnicity – are made with reference to consumption practices (Bourdieu 1984). Bourdieu's own analysis has since been revised to take in subcultures with their own media networks (Thornton 1995:12-14), or to posit that distinction may be less to do with positive high-status symbols than with symbolically excluding markers ascribed low status (Bryson 1996:894). Even though Katherine Verdery (1991:5) has argued that Bourdieu's notions of cultural capital and symbolic markets are not appropriate for socialist systems, where capital and markets operated differently, symbolic value-judgements about consumption are nonetheless important aspects of social interaction in ex-Yugoslavia – and besides, Yugoslav socialism was more open to markets than other eastern-European socialist systems (Duda 2005; Vuletić 2006).

'Folk' served before and after Yugoslavia's disintegration as a boundary-marking symbol in identity narratives and group construction, but the same disapproval strategies could originate from different standpoints. Supporters of 'spiritual renewal' or an ethnic-essentialist concept of Croatian culture rejected *narodnjaci* because they transgressed symbolic geographical borders (see Bakić-Hayden and Hayden 1992), as seen in the

tamburica controversies. However, others who rejected the former group's populist politics *also* excluded narodnjaci from a normative conception of culture in Croatia based on their social connotations – although they used equally 'Balkanist' imagery. As in Croatian political discourse, extremely different cultural agendas were nonetheless fought out 'within the confines of the Balkan–Europe dichotomy' (Razsa and Lindstrom 2004:639).

It is worth thinking about at least two axes of value-judgements – anti-eastern and anti-collectivist – rather than one simple discursive opposition to narodnjaci, and indeed narodnjaci were not *always* the object of exclusion in cultural-political struggles. *Feral tribune* actually defended narodnjaci against the state's nationalising policies during the *Leina* case, describing the 1991 anti-NCFM campaign as potentially 'cultural xenophobia' (Rašeta 1993). In 1995, *Globus* was so pre-occupied with Herzegovinans-in-Zagreb that it uncharacteristically reported on folk nightclubs by sympathising with them (instead of the usual journalistic othering of folk and its regular audiences) and othering the boorish Herzegovinans who, having threatened singers at gunpoint during the war, were now requesting 'newly-composed music by authors from the Yugoslav federation' (Sabalić 1995). However, when symbolic social value-judgements involving music recurred in Croatian cultural politics the institutional power to speak was usually directed against folk. This section considers three: reactions to the showbusiness folk-pop crossover; the myth of the Croatian 'rocker-soldier'; and the 1999 elections, where popular music became as integral to the opposition's political marketing as to the incumbent HDZ's.

3.3.1 The folk-pop crossover

Much Croatian zabavna music in and after the 1990s was characterised by the use of 'folk' elements, as signalled by the *Leina* case. Its leading producers – the so-called 'hitmakers' (Rajko Dujmić, Tonči Huljić, Nenad Ninčević, Đorđe Novković, Zdenko Runjić, Zrinko Tutić) who tended to act as composers and managers – had had, like all musicians, to adapt to post-war Croatia's new cultural circumstances. These included the loss of professional contacts in Serbia (several had worked with Belgrade's leading pop/folk lyricist, Marina Tucaković, in the 1980s¹²⁹), the ideology of Croatian cultural distinctiveness, and the

¹²⁹ A persistent Croatian rumour holds that Huljić did *not* break off with Tucaković, but secretly continued to receive lyrics from her and attribute them to his wife, whose name appeared on most of his 1990s songs' lyrics – one version even had Huljić and Tucaković faxing each other via Hungary during the war (Maksimović 1998b). Both have denied this. Its apparent believability (often related to me as gossip) still indicates that Tucaković's and Huljić's songs were interpreted as sharing lyrical themes and

evident gap in the market after the anti-NCFM campaign. Croatian producers responded by continuing pre-1991 practices of incorporating folk elements into conventionally-arranged zabavna music, they promoted dance music with thematic similarities to folk (above), or, most directly, they hired Croatian vocalists to re-voice songs originally performed by now-unacceptable singers (6.2.2).

The most persistent technique was the ‘crossover’ practice arranging folk tremolo, rhythms and metres as pop. Of those who used it, Huljić was the one critics mostly associated (pejoratively) with ‘folklorising’ pop – although the focus overlooked other composers’ contributions to folklorisation in Croatia, which actually predated the ideological anti-NCFM campaign (Baker 2007). Instead, an existing Yugoslav folklorisation trend was later nationalised into something Croatian. Huljić was probably singled out because of his songs’ high HRT rotation and his friendship with Tuđman’s influential adviser Ivić Pašalić, supposedly key in the ‘Herzegovinan lobby’, although other composers (especially Zrinko Tutić) had also benefited from political/media patronage: Tutić was close to HRT and the state before 1996, though Huljić came more into favour after 1997. The elite’s tendency to favour ‘cultural personalities who were sympathetic to the government’ rather than necessarily ‘the most talented’ (Fisher 2006:101) – a frequent cause of frustration in the ethno movement – was borne out by state broadcasting policy’s apparent favouritism. Any account of Croatian musical folklorisation should also include Miroslav Rus, whose approach to tamburica (3.1.4) had as lasting an effect as Huljić’s approach to zabavna. After 2000, Rus’s association with Juraj Hrvačić’s media group (4.5.1) would give him the same institutional advantages Huljić enjoyed in the late 1990s. Taking the focus back to the 1980s, meanwhile, calls attention to Croatian composers’ position within a Yugoslav rather than a strictly national framework, when cross-border collaborations were routine (6.2.2).

3.3.2 The rocker-soldier myth

Rock/folk constructs also became ethnicised during the Homeland War to associate Croats with Western rock and Serbs with eastern folk. This symbolism contributed to tamburica ideology (3.1.1), but was even more direct in imagery, popularised early in the war, of Croatian volunteers as rockers. The rocker-soldier, wearing earrings, Ray-Bans and a black headband and listening to Guns & Roses or Dire Straits on his (hardly ever her) Walkman, was central to the iconography of the Croatian soldier analysed by Reana Senjković.

techniques, e.g. emphasised suffering, deceit and frustrated love, contemporary life-stages, repetitive rhythms/rhymes and pastoral/religious imagery (Baker 2007:147).

Senjković (2002:198–215) identifies the iconography's sources and shows how volunteers' choice of equipment (and journalists' choice of photographs) helped associate them with media/cinematic images of US soldiers and avoid resemblance to the Yugoslav army. Benjamin Perasović (2001:336–8), meanwhile, argues that the imagery produced a temporary reconciliation between parents and youth subcultures. However, it is also worth considering how the rocker-soldier myth fed on and into politicised narratives of identity.

The rocker-soldier myth drew on the existing myth of rock culture as a sign of urbanity and progressiveness, and the youthful volunteers photographed for *Globus* in summer 1991 were coded through dress as members of an international rock culture. Even if such a focus on style could also risk being interpreted as effeminate dandyism by outsiders (see Schäuble, in press), its subtext reinforced broader depictions of civilisational differences between Croats and their backward aggressors (Senjković 2002:198). When Vera Horvat-Pintarić (1991) re-stated the myth in December 1991, she associated rock culture with individualism, so that the soldiers' dress 'shows understandable repulsion towards everything from former Communist regimes, but also [...] demonstrates the continuity of *alternative* culture in the war' (emphasis original). Rene Bakalović's commentary (1991) accompanying *Globus*'s first rocker-soldiers photo-story in August made even more explicit contrasts with the enemy. While 'the Great Serb forces seek their symbolic insignia in village Četnik sources' so that 'a Serb fighter from the last century would not stand out from his [comrades] even today',¹³⁰ Croatian soldiers did 'not seek inspiration for their appearance in history' but drew their stylistic vocabulary from films and comics about Vietnam, martial arts and street-fighting.¹³¹

However, a closer look at this first commentary shows that rock *music*, as opposed to rock *style*, was added to the myth later. Bakalović had actually insisted:

Rock in a narrower sense is not present; the approach to hairstyles does not mean that post-punk music is listened to among Croatian warriors. The references are civic, completely urban, but the actors themselves are suburban and provincial children. (Bakalović 1991)

Rock music itself entered the iconography through the mediation of journalists, who extrapolated from one subcultural attribute to another. The television journalist Tihomir Ladišić advanced the symbolism by soundtracking his famous 1991 war documentary *Banijska oluja* (*Banja storm*) with Gang of Four, the Doors, Psihomodo Pop (a Croatian

¹³⁰ This implied inferiority, but historical continuity and Četnik iconography was actually highly valued by many Serbian volunteers (Čolović 1994).

¹³¹ The headline was 'Street heroes against the shaggy monsters' (referring to Četniks' beards).

punk band) and the Ramones (Horvat-Pintarić 1991); a famous photograph of a young soldier beside a 'Guns & Roses' graffiti was reprinted; Croatian rock musicians, especially Jura Stublić (2.2.1), contributed patriotic songs to raise front-line soldiers' morale. By the end of 1991 the rocker-soldier myth had coalesced.

Bakalović did not state what sort of music the 'suburban and provincial children' listened to instead; a fair number, however, inconvenienced journalistic symbolism by listening to precisely the same NCFM which was supposed to characterise their enemies. (Zdravko Šljivac, the tamburica promoter, put this down to 'some of our fighters who gave so much for the homeland, [having] been previously poisoned by that music' (Goles 1998). Alen Borbaš, a volunteer who went on to open a folk nightclub in Osijek, mentioned Croatian soldiers listening to Serbian narodnjaci at the front on a 2006 *Latinica*, and Dragica Brkić used to tell of her guardsman husband spending one New Year's Eve at the front watching narodnjaci on a Serbian television revue (Hudelist 1995).

Given the media's role in filling out the rocker-solder image, the 'myth of the Croatian soldier going to the front with a Walkman and the Rolling Stones' (Cvetnić 1997) may have satisfied an 'insider's wish by journalists' for Croatian soldiers to resemble powerful western armies and invincible cinematic heroes (Senjković 2002:198). It has persisted nonetheless. *Jutarnji list* articles on the 11th anniversary of Oluja attempted to challenge the hegemony of militant veterans (see 4.1) by remembering other participants who did not fit their nationalist and masculinist model,¹³² and by mentioning 'naturally apolitical bands like Psihomodo Pop' as symbols of a time when the Croatian war effort was marked by professionalism and ethnic tolerance rather than the venality and chauvinism of 'political turbo-folk Croatia' which had prevailed after Oluja and ended 'the idealistic age of the creation of the Croatian state' (Butković 2006a). The presentation of actual veterans as far more heterogeneous in nationality, ethnicity and gender acted as a brief intervention in post-Tuđman cultural politics. Although it put 1991 rock mythology to different ends, it still depended on its continued relevance and resonance.

3.3.3 The 1999 elections

Using popular music for political communication had been integral to Croatian election campaigning ever since the first multi-party elections (1990), when HDZ organised many rallies featuring well-known singers/actors as well as political speeches. Besides the role of

¹³² E.g. a female ex-member of 118 Brigade who positioned herself subculturally by saying she had used to go to the Kulušić club in Zagreb (a famous 1980s rock venue) and 'listened to Led Zeppelin, the Pixies and the new wave', and politically through her refusal to fight in the war in Bosnia (Matković 2006).

tamburica in these rallies (3.1.1), they also involved zabavna stars with wide appeal (e.g. Doris Dragović, Đani Maršan, or Novi Fosili's lead singer Sanja Doležal) in all Croatia's regions. Other parties quickly signed up their own songs and personalities: one of the best-remembered was Savka Dabčević-Kučar using Prljavo Kazalište's *Ruža hrvatska* (*Croatian rose*), which had famously been banned by Radio Zagreb as chauvinistic (even though ostensibly about Jasenko Houra's mother) and then performed on Trg Bana Jelačića on New Year's Eve 1989 (Žanić 1993:172-4). However, other parties' use of popular music took place within a communicative framework already established by HDZ – perhaps another way in which, as Bellamy (2003:76) argues, 1990s HDZ dominated the discursive field of politics by setting the boundaries within which other parties could articulate narratives.

The electoral use of music was sometimes as pragmatic as a party wanting to attract a large audience to hear its speeches and a performer wanting to be paid. Performers usually stated they considered rallies as business engagements, although both Gustafi and Šajeta discussed their genuine support for IDS (Kalapoš 2002:53, 72). However, a party's choice of music and musicians also tied performers' connotations to the party's own. During the 1999 elections, the opposition coalition dominated by the socialist SDP and liberal HSLS took advantage of this symbolic communication method by trading on the existing symbolism of individualist rock against collectivist folk. The prominent place of rock in the coalition's marketing implied folk as the cultural symbol of the other, drawing on the toolkit of 'anti-nationalist' (Jansen 2005a:88) discursive practices.

SDP and HSLS presented slightly different, but complementary, musical images. SDP's campaign song became *Vrijeme je da se krene* (*It's time to get moving*), by the alternative rock band Majke from Vinkovci. It had originally been written to describe the frontman Goran Bare's battle with heroin; SDP transferred the sentiment of 'turning round' to a change of government, but also communicated their familiarity with 'alternative' culture and membership of the individualist, anti-collectivist 'rock' worldview. HSLS's principal association was with Gibonni, who appeared in one television advertisement playing his *Činim pravu stvar* (*I'm doing the right thing*) while HSLS's leader Dražen Budiša accompanied him on the clarinet (Senjković 2002:108–9). Gibonni also spoke during the campaign about his Catholic faith and the lessons of tolerance and social consciousness he drew from it, describing himself as a 'left Catholic' (Čulić 1999b).

In November 1999, Gibonni and Parni Valjak began to supplement their campaign performances with a fundraising tour to support the coalition, deliberately held in theatres

rather than improvised venues such as sports halls. The tour finished just before Christmas with a four-hour rock concert in Zagreb, where the coalition's prime-ministerial candidate Ilica Račan was helpfully seen dancing and the concert finished with *Vrijeme je* (Skender 1999). Valjak's Husein Hasanefendić-Hus contrasted the tour's 'normal civilised audience' with HDZ's 'political meetings' (Malić 1999). Even *Večernji list* came to describe it as 'a new, western "model" of funding election campaigns, modelled on the practice of "stars" in countries with high democratic standards' (Mikac 1999). Zlatko Gall (1999b) argued that Hus and Gibonni supporting the opposition was much more damaging to HDZ than pro-opposition engagement by alternative rock/rap musicians: Gibonni and Parni Valjak were MOR institutions, making it the first time showbusiness had not been squarely in the service of the state.

The rock/folk worldview conflict was also a central image of the Glas 99 (Vote 99) campaign organised by several NGOs to increase turnout – after the precedent of the major NGO campaign to save Zagreb's Radio 101 (a pro-rock anti-government talk and music station) from HDZ's withdrawal of its concession in 1996/97. One 'spot-the-difference' image targeting youth contrasted a rock guitarist with sedate folk-dancers – and took added force from youth resentment at pre-election police raids on bars/nightclubs (Fisher and Bijelić 2007:66). *Feral* also opposed the 'urban sound' to tamburica: the punk band Hladno Pivo and the Split hip-hop collective TBF were both asked in interviews close to election time whether the 'urban sound' might now silence tamburica or 'Croatian neofolk' (Đilas 1999; Pilić 2000). Music also dominated one of the campaign's biggest projects, the *Novo vrijeme* (*New time*) video, including many 'urban' musicians; the song had originally been performed by the Slovenian new-wave band Buldožer in the 1980s.¹³³ The specialist rock label Jabukaton, known for the Fijū brijū rock festivals, helped organise the video (Matić 1999), and the dance/funk singer Dino Dvornik (1999) harnessed his biographical image to the campaign by explaining he too had never voted before but had now concluded that 'this time I must fulfil my civic duty' and 'vote for my future'. *Novo vrijeme* was banned by HTV and the electoral commission as indirectly political, although the Constitutional Court overthrew the decision just before polling day (Fisher and Bijelić 2007:66).

¹³³ 1980s new wave was remembered as an expression of creativity, youthful resistance and urban spirit at a time of cultural stagnation (Pogačar 2006). These meanings appealed not only to voters who had experienced new wave the first time but also to younger ones who had been discovering and enjoying new wave bands.

Conclusion

1990s popular music production suffered several ideological and financial constraints. Although music had not been free from ideological interference under the Yugoslav regime – witness its treatment of Vice Vukov after his participation in the Croatian Spring (Vuletić 2007:90–1) – the ideological changes which accompanied political change disrupted many musicians, especially zabavna ones. Collaboration with other ex-Yugoslav colleagues was hampered and music was expected to conform to different definitions of cultural identity, but audiences' demands did not change so quickly (hence the scramble to 'replace' NCFM). Ilko Čulić (1999a) argued that at least six models of 'new Croatian narodnjak' had emerged: three mainstream ones (*Ljepom našom*'s 'pseudo-traditional tamburica', the Huljić sound, Thompson's revival of Bosnian folk-rock) and three which were kept marginalised through 'fear of the new political commissars and music editors' self-censorship' (Roma music; imitations of Serbian 'turbo-folk'; heavy accordion playing simulating 1980s NCFM). The situation led to constant disagreements between music industry and media interest groups, who fell back on standards of Croatianness or genre boundaries to gain professional advantages.

Economic limitations on music were no less severe. The effects of the war compounded those of the late-1980s economic crisis (e.g. many savers' losses in the Ljubljanska banka affair) and made for a market with low purchasing power and few purpose-built concert venues. For some years popular music was dependent on state television and thus vulnerable to ideological, political or personal pressure. Many musicians compensated by performing in richer Slovenia, although it was impossible to recover the full extent of the ex-Yugoslav market's 20 million consumers since performing in Serbia/Montenegro remained politically unthinkable for most of the decade. Mainstream music, which depended on a large consumer base and media promotion, was worse affected than underground or alternative scenes. Music critics and rock listeners whom I met in 2006–07 commonly remembered the 1990s as a *more* productive and creative time for alternative music than the 2000s, pointing particularly to the emergence of Majke and Hladno Pivo. If alternatives and undergrounds define themselves through 'othering [...] the mainstream' (Thornton 1995:5), rejecting the 1990s mainstream arguably had a constructive effect.

Darko Hudelist's argument situating the tamburica as one of Tuđman's key symbols of nationhood suggests that it, just like a coat-of-arms, was intended to permeate the everyday as a subtle reminder of difference from the national Other. Television, thanks to its

embeddedness in domestic life (Silverstone 1994), carried the nationalising project into the home, fulfilling the early Croatian state's imperative of 'ensur[ing] a nationally bounded and unified population' (Čapo Žmegač 2007:146) by constructing Others from its former neighbours. However, the home also exposed the limits of cultural politics, since music consumption was limited only by family politics and people's ingenuity in getting hold of music rather than by public criteria. Kristina, now a press officer in her thirties, was in her early twenties during the 1990s. Her favourite bands included Dire Straits and Azra, Johnny Štulić's influential new-wave band from Zagreb. Azra's music was publicly somewhat marginalised during the 1990s: they were given comparatively little state-media airplay, and Croatia Records only reissued their albums with small print runs on terms unfavourable to Štulić. Kristina explained this was because Štulić had left Croatia for the Netherlands and 'stayed on good terms with Belgrade' while breaking links with Croatia. Nevertheless, in her experience 'everyone listened to Azra' in the late nineties anyway, even 'people who were too small to listen to Johnny Štulić in the seventies or maybe weren't born' then. They played Azra records at parties, and young amateur bands often covered Azra songs. How did they get to know Azra's music if, as Kristina said, Azra were hardly visible in the media? From 'older brothers' – and Kristina's mother actually listened to Azra too. Perhaps memory under Tuđman was not confiscated so much as confined indoors.

Alex Bellamy and Timothy Edmunds (2005:72) characterise Tuđman's post-1993 rule as a period of using the military for 'regime defence'. The same could be said of the official approach to popular music, which aimed to insulate it from foreign cultural/professional competition while broadcasting cultural identity narratives into the everyday. Insulation was more attainable than altering public perceptions. The students I met in Croatia who had grown up during the 1990s had only two abiding musical memories of the decade – patriotic 'band-aids' (2.1.4), and dance: so much for tamburica, even though it had been as prominent as dance and lasted longer.¹³⁴ Several said their exposure to music had depended much more on what went on at home (which sometimes had little to do with what was actually happening in Croatia) than on any national developments.

Several conversations like this gave me the impression that of all the 1990s production directions dance had actually done its narrative job best. I once asked Leo, a graphic designer in his twenties, why he thought dance had been so successful: he immediately

¹³⁴ Amanda, unusually, remembered Maja Blagdan and Doris Dragović competing for Croatia at Eurovision (where both had been heavily promoted at home and came fourth). She then discussed Hrvatski Band Aid, which had included them.

related it to ideas of west and east, and told me that ET's biggest hit *Tek je 12 sati* (*It's only 12 o'clock*) had done so well because it was so western. I asked him about the structural reasons for the music industry turning to dance (which I had just started to think through), but he said he had never thought about it that way. Several dozen interviews are not enough to form a firm conclusion; however, the most explicit attempts to narrate Croatian cultural identity through music seem to have been the least successful.

Individuals' narrations of identity with reference to music, however, were as common as before (see Ines Prica's work on teenage subcultures in the 1980s) or since; in the 1999 elections, they even became a political resource. New experiences of everyday life in the 1990s were explained through existing narratives or myths about ex-Yugoslav society – as observed by Stef Jansen (2005a, 2005b) during his mid-nineties fieldwork – where music was a prominent symbol for identification, classification, categorisation and boundary-maintenance. Identifying oneself and categorising others through symbols indicate the relationships of similarity and difference with which identity continually needs to be re-established (Jenkins 1996:3–4). Social interaction based on these perceptions thus produces a symbolic boundary for the group – and members' perceptions need not be identical as long as they agree on the same symbol (Cohen 1985:12–13). The dynamic occurs at all levels of group identity – whether ad-hoc value-judgements about one's neighbours and surroundings or national narratives which inform state policy.

In one national identity narrative the tamburica was just such a symbol – where the people who played it might differ among themselves but were more similar than people who did not play it at all (disregarding the inconvenient fact that Serbs and Roma in neighbouring Vojvodina also played it vigorously and Croats in Dalmatia were very happy with their own stringed instrument, the mandolin). In certain critical and professional narratives, the boundary-symbols were various 'inauthentic' or 'eastern' musical elements. Tudman's death and HDZ's electoral defeat at the turn of the century raised expectations that the conditions for cultural production would change (for better or worse, depending on one's professional and cultural position). Certain developments – particularly the non-state-backed patriotic popular music which represented veterans' experiences and defended war-crimes indictees – nonetheless exhibited more continuity than change.

4 Music and nationalism after 2000

The 1990s waves of patriotic popular music were stimulated by the government and the pro-state media. Songwriters selected narratives of national identity and ideological interpretations from current political discourse, with particular emphasis on the historical continuity of the nation, gendered duties to the state, and the reintegration of occupied territories into the homeland. After Tuđman's death and the 2000 presidential and parliamentary elections, the state was far less interested in political communication through music, and HDZ's media patronage networks weakened after broadcasting reforms. The production of music which explicitly defined a narrative of Croatian national identity was left to the market instead, during several years of right-wing agitation against a centre-left (thus supposedly 'Communist') government. The government's co-operation in proceedings against Croatian war crimes indictees (including high-ranked generals) left it open to allegations of treachery against the nation.

After 2000, patriotic popular music was one of the most flourishing – and controversial – segments of the music industry, focusing on the generals and the experiences of veterans, a distinctive post-war social group. Instead of the 1990s state/media complex, patriotic production was now stimulated by a privately-owned media network promoting its favoured musicians across radio, live events, magazines and recording. Music combined with other cultural forms to produce an oppositional right-wing narrative of identity, although whether and how to incorporate the memory of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) into the narrative remained contentious. This wave of patriotic music also drew on forms of regionally-based popular music which conveyed musicians' (and listeners') relationship to their birthplace through musical and lexical conventions. Like their predecessors, these patriotic singers developed their performance personas through codes of off-stage authenticity which represented their biographies and narrative personas as consistent.

Such personas illustrate Richard Dyer's theory of stars' images being constructed across a range of media texts (not just their own films/songs but deliberate promotion and publicity and unofficial commentary and criticism). Audiences select and reject certain meanings in forming their own ideas about the star (Dyer 1998:60–63). The performance and subject-matter of Croatian patriotic showbusiness also involved Graham Dawson's concept of the 'soldier hero', sustained through mass-media 'public narratives' and

inspiring consumer goods. Soldier-heroes promoted a masculinity of men realising themselves through adventure/combat rather than domestic life (Dawson 1994:105–6, 150). The commemoration of General Ante Gotovina after his indictment and flight from justice recalled the soldier-hero phenomenon and inspired posters, biographies, clothing and other goods. However, the most prominent patriotic musician after 2000, Marko Perković Thompson, personally bridged the gap between entertainment star and soldier hero: the text of his music and stardom as the former relied upon his status as the latter.

This chapter concentrates on five musicians: Thompson, Miroslav Škoro, Niko Bete, Shorty and Tomislav Bralić. Thompson and Škoro had both broken into entertainment with debut hits during the Homeland War (2.2.3, 2.3.3). Thompson had played the disappointed veteran in music since 1998, and Škoro had often sung about the effects of the war in Slavonia on civilians. Bete had been little known during the 1990s and did not participate in the star system to the same extent as Škoro or Thompson, although his anthems in support of Gotovina and Mirko Norac (another indicted general) raised his profile. The Slavonian rapper Dalibor Bartulović-Shorty and the pop-klapa singer Tomislav Bralić also benefited after 2005 from the promotional opportunities available to patriotic singers. Comparing these musicians' lyrics and visual presentation provides insights into their narratives of national, regional and gender identity. However, their indirect contribution to other narratives of identity is visible through critical and everyday responses to their music. These urban, cultural and taste-culture identities could be affirmed by referring to patriotic showbusiness (particularly Thompson) as a symbol of what did *not* belong to the group's cultural markers.

4.1 Music and the veterans' protests

Tuđman's death in December 1999, Ivica Račan's election as centre-left Prime Minister in January 2000 and Stjepan Mesić's election as president soon afterwards marked Croatia's second transition – from the 1990s' 'democratic authoritarianism' towards democracy (Bellamy 2002:45). The right-wing challenge to Račan's legitimacy accused him, as the last Croatian Communist leader, of reintroducing Communist atheism and disrespecting the sacrifices made by the Croat people during the Homeland War. Many demonstrations against Račan and Mesić followed, led by retired generals, HDZ politicians and the veterans' society HVIDRA. Discontent focused on the government's co-operation with the Hague Tribunal by ordering the arrests of high-ranking Croatian officers (especially

Gotovina and Norac). Račan's defence reforms were also presented as 'an attack on the memory of the Homeland War' (Bellamy and Edmunds 2005:78), although officers might also have had more pragmatic reasons to be upset: Račan's defence policy involved budget and job cuts, while in 2000 Mesić had dismissed twelve generals (including Gotovina) for writing an open letter against indictees' extraditions.

The rallies culminated in February 2001 with a demonstration on the Riva in Split, attended by an estimated 100,000 people. The manifesto of another veterans' protest in Zagreb that October called on the government to revoke the warrant for Gotovina's arrest, postpone all other arrests of 'Croatian defenders' before a referendum on their rights, reject the International Monetary Fund 'diktat' which planned to reduce Croatian living standards to the Balkan average, and reinstate dismissed soldiers and policemen (*Arena* 2001). The metaphor of 'defenders' ('branitelji'), the universal term for Homeland War veterans, helped to naturalise the narrative of the Croatian war effort as purely defensive. Moreover, it invoked a narrative of self-defence against foreign threats which dated back to the Austro-Turkish wars and implied that males needed to protect national freedom, tradition, honour and women (Schäuble, in press). The protesters held that indicting any branitelj equated to proclaiming the Homeland War and Croatian independence as illegitimate (Peskin and Boduszynski 2003:1117–8).

The left-leaning weekly *Feral tribune* alleged that the anti-Hague protests had actually been orchestrated by Tuđman's ex-adviser Ivić Pašalić to destabilise the Račan–Mesić state and regain power for the right, and pointed to the role of the Headquarters for Defending the Dignity of the Homeland War (Stožer za obranu digniteta Domovinskog rata) in many of the events (Đikić 2001a). *Feral's* scenario began in Split, where HVIDRA militancy and football riots were supposedly intended as a show of far-right strength (Matijanić 2000a). It went on to posit a media offensive where Nenad Ivanković (ex-editor of the state daily *Vjesnik*) would mythologise the fugitive Gotovina in his biography, Zagreb and Split local broadcasters (OTV and ATV) would televise events like the Riva rally, while Tuđman's son Miroslav and the ex-admiral Davor Domazet-Lošo would talk menacingly about a coup (Đikić 2001b). Mesić also accused HDZ councillors and retired generals of financing the rallies to give the appearance of a mass movement (Daskalović 2001).

Veterans had emerged after the war 'as a new and specific social group' (Bougarel 2007:167) of men mainly in their thirties and forties after the second transition. They called on symbolic representations of their sacrifice during the conflict to justify their existing privileges and ask for them to be extended. Bosniak veterans often illustrated their

sacrifice by talking about the memory of ‘šehidi’ (Islamic martyrs, i.e. fallen soldiers) (Bougarel 2007:184–5). Croatian equivalents included the idea of defence (hence ‘branitelj’), and sometimes more specific referents such as imprisonment by the enemy or the fall of Vukovar. Many groups also claimed that their wartime sacrifice gave them privileged positions to speak out against contemporary developments (e.g. political/cultural contacts with Serbia).¹³⁵ This role had helped legitimise the Tuđman regime in the late 1990s when HVIDRA protested against the ICTY (Bellamy and Edmunds 2005:82), but also echoed Partisan veterans’ status as ‘memory watchdogs’ (Hoepken 1999:197) in Tito’s Yugoslavia (Grandits 2007:107). Despite their state funding under Tuđman (Fisher 2006:139), Croatian veterans’ groups were not as close to the state as the Partisan organisation. They nonetheless claimed a similar position to make moral judgements which were structured according to the dominant narrative of the Homeland War. Thompson’s own narrative of his identity as a veteran was the basis for his claim to speak about war memory and politics after 2000, although he had already expressed veterans’ resentment through his music in the late 1990s (2.4.3). His 2002 album *E, moj narode* (O, my people) was prepared and released at the height of the protests.

4.1.1 Thompson and star image

E, moj narode contained re-arranged versions of three late-1990s oppositional-patriotic songs (*Lijepa li si, Ne varaj me* and *Geni kameni*), but its central political texts were the title track and a duet with Miroslav Škoro called *Reci, brate moj* (Tell [me], my brother), delivered (like 1998’s *Prijatelji*) from a veteran’s viewpoint. The title song framed current politics as the latest recurrence of an eternal threat. It claimed ‘the devil’s forces’ (‘vražje sile’) – whether as Antichrists, Masons or Communists (‘antikristi i masoni, komunisti ovi, oni’) – had been trying to eliminate the Croats ‘since the time of Christ’ (‘od vremena još od Krista’). Thompson asked his people to put their differences aside and unite as Croats, since ‘everything valuable, we attained together’ (‘sve smo što nam je vrijedno stekli zajedno’). Reinforcements came from the ‘generations of heroes and the victorious strong army’ who were ‘still caring and dying for the Homeland’ (‘generacije junaka i pobjednička vojska jaka/još se brine i gine zbog Domovine’), and the Son of God, whom Thompson finally called on to lead ‘us’ to victory.

¹³⁵ For one such incident see 6.1.5. The veterans’ activist Vlado Gojanović, who defended the 2004 film *Svjedoci* (which depicted a Croat war-crime) when HSP campaigned against it (Crnković 2007:268), is an exception.

RBM was conceived by Škoro, who had invited Thompson along because ‘you are a warrior’ and therefore ought to sing it (Ivić 2005a). Škoro had also launched his career with a wartime hit, expressing the emotions of refugees from Slavonia (Bonifačić 1998:146); now, he lamented how quickly the war and soldiers’ sacrifices had apparently been forgotten. The pair asked each other to ‘light a candle for all those who fell for the home’ (‘svijeću upali za sve one koji su za dom pali’), and warned that ‘if, God forbid, we’re needed, the thick fog will fall again’ (‘al’ neka, ne da Bog, pa nas budu trebali, opet će se gusta magla spustiti’). Thompson’s verse included a reference to wine flowing ‘like the Čikola [river]’ and ‘the fairy of Velebit calling out’, alluding to his birthplace’s landscape (and epic tradition). Naming the Čikola, where the ‘brothers’ had famously stood in the first line of *Bojna Čavoglave* (Thompson’s debut), directly harnessed the off-stage aspects of Thompson’s star image to give moral weight to his personification of a veteran.

Thompson’s star image also built on those of other musicians, particularly the man-of-the-people image of singers like Mišo Kovač. Kovač, a leading performer of the Dalmatian popular music which offered one Croatian counterpart to Serbian/Bosnian NCFM, often sang about Dalmatians’ and emigrants’ relationship to their home. He had distanced himself from politicians at the start of the war, and indeed famously (or notoriously) spoke out against nationalism’s destructive potential in 1989 (Luković 1989:244). However, he briefly associated himself with HSP’s radical right-wing position in 1992-93 after losing his teenage son Edi (an army volunteer).¹³⁶ Kovač’s comeback album *Pjesma za Ediju* (*Song for Edi*) was split between songs about his personal grief and others ‘dedicated to all the young men fighting for our Croatia and for Croats in Herzegovina’ (Pašić 1993), and was accompanied by a sell-out concert at the Poljud stadium in Split. Kovač’s own performance persona had always been an average family man, and the Poljud concert channelled this personal authenticity into a claim to be able to speak for everyone who had lost loved ones during the war.

The codes of emotional communication established by singers like Kovač made Thompson’s own communication familiar and intelligible. However, his performance persona was revised when his veteran identity became the key source of his musical authenticity. His love songs were then downplayed through memorial strategies such as omitting them from his greatest-hits compilation (2003) and increasingly from concerts. This created the impression of a career consistently dedicated to his post-2000 projection

¹³⁶ Kovač wore a HOS uniform at one of his first public appearances after Edi’s death, although later explained it as just a defiant message to whoever ordered the killing (Tomić 1992).

as a guardian of war memory and Croatian values – his frequently-quoted triad ‘God, family and homeland’ (‘Bog, obitelj i domovina’). Thompson represented the archetypal veteran just as Kovač had represented the archetypal mourning father after Edi’s death: both gained their authenticity and claim to speak through the interaction of music and off-stage information which narrated their biographies and composed their ‘star text’.

4.1.2 History and politics

Thompson’s narrative of national history on *EMN* overlapped with Tuđman’s ideology. For Tuđman (as for Thompson) contemporary Croats should be proud of preserving their culture despite centuries of oppression and ‘finally [...] creat[ing] their own sovereign state all by themselves’ (Uzelac 2006:214). Tuđman also often referred to the nation’s internal and external enemies during the past and present – with internal enemies including ‘[t]hose who refused to accept Tuđman’s ideas’ about the nation (Uzelac 2006:215). Legitimising present reality by invoking ancestors, emphasising the recurrence of heroism and evil, and portraying dead heroes as eternally on guard for the homeland were common themes of ‘contemporary war folklore’ in the early 1990s (Čolović 1994:133), and earlier patriotic popular music, notably *Od stoljeća sedmog* (*Since the seventh century*) in 1991, had also explored ideas of historical continuity and timeless unity against timeless threats (2.2.5). The wartime style of political communication through popular culture persisted in projects such as *EMN*.

Thompson’s own political engagement during this period saw him standing up for ‘the dignity of the Homeland War’, reinforcing his songs’ message. He expressed concern at the creeping social acceptance of Communist symbols, such as the reformed HTV not showing his *Lijepa li si* video with images of Tuđman and Boban’s grave but allowing a video by the Bosnian band Zabranjeno Pušenje to show Tito and the Yugoslav flag (Kruhak 2001c). He explained that he still sang patriotic songs because they were necessary:

Everything that’s going on in Croatia troubles me and so as an individual and a public figure, I genuinely feel obliged to speak out.
(Morić 2002b)

He also performed at some events organised by the anti-government veterans/generals campaign, e.g. a Stožer rally in Split against the Serbian president Vojislav Koštunica visiting Zagreb (Matijanić 2000b). He did not support any party during the 2003 elections, even though he had used to perform for HSP. Instead, he hoped:

that our politicians make a big coalition to get these communists out the door [...] The values I've talked about are faith in God, the homeland and the family. Those are the basic guidelines in most of our parties' programmes. But another thing is an imperative for me – Croatian unity, which I've constantly, tirelessly called for. I hoped that all patriots would assemble around the Croatian state-building parties – branitelji, intellectuals, people from public life... (Kruhac 2003)

A pre-election statement on his website condemned 'the current Communist government [which] has done everything to destroy the Croatian state, to sell it, to indebt it, and to humiliate and shame the Croatian defenders and eminent individuals who created it'. He again pointed out that most of "our" parties' programmes' included his basic values of God, family and homeland, and repeated his call for patriots to unite (Thompson.hr 2003a). However, some journalists took what Thompson understood as a valuable call for unity as an attack on political pluralism or the democratic system.

Others, who supported the protests, did not view Thompson's politics negatively. Josip Jović (2002) praised him for 'going against the wind sweeping over Croatia after 3 January 2000' (Račan's election) since the government had 'massively insulted the nation's national and religious feelings' by spending time with Serbian politicians and submitting Croatia to the oligarchic 'new world order' while arresting Croats for war crimes. Jović, the editor of *Slobodna Dalmacija*, had famously published an interview with the fugitive Norac, and attempted to fill out Thompson's public image to suit the anti-government right by making him a symbol for how Račan/Mesić should be resisted. The various political meanings attached to Thompson were focused during his Poljud concert in September 2002, where opponents and supporters both found evidence for their interpretations in the concert's iconography and audience behaviour.

4.1.3 The Poljud concert, 2002

Thompson's Poljud concert attracted some 40,000 people, including many prominent right-wing politicians (Pašalić, the governor of Split–Dalmatia county Branko Lukšić, and others), sportsmen, and a judge (Slavko Lozina) then presiding over a case of wartime prison abuses at the Lora naval base. Security was provided by HVIDRA members in black T-shirts with a slogan ('pobjednička vojska jaka') from one of Thompson's songs.¹³⁷ The concert had a pre-recorded overture featuring Thompson, Ivan Mikulić and Zlatni

¹³⁷ Security guards at a 2003 pro-Norac concert in Sinj wore the same T-shirts. Thompson performed as did Ivan Mikulić, Niko Bete, Dražen Žanko (singer of *Od stoljeća sedmog*), Mate Bulić (Thompson's close friend) and others (Paštar 2003).

dukati singing *Sveto tlo hrvatsko* (*Holy Croatian soil*). This directly addressed Tuđman and recalled ‘the days when we were together/friend beside friend, we defended Croatia’ (‘dane kad smo skupa bili mi/prijatelj do prijatelja, Hrvatsku smo branili’). Tuđman had also been evoked a few days previously when Pašalić launched his new political party, Croatian Bloc (HB). Pašalić said HDZ had become ‘the de-Tuđmanisers’ silent ally’ and promised to combine Tuđman’s heritage with lowering unemployment, improving the economy and restoring dignity to the Homeland War and national symbols (Klauški 2002).

Thompson did not comment on party politics so explicitly during the concert, which he began with *Čavoglave* and ended with *EMN*. However, he did point to two seats left vacant for Norac (imprisoned) and Gotovina (on the run). His finale, from a hydraulic lift, was followed by an encore of *Lijepa li si* bringing all its vocalists on stage.¹³⁸ The sociologist Dražen Lalić believed that the concert’s organisers had deliberately used ‘supposedly non-political means’ to promote a right-wing programme of ‘unity, mobilisation and cohesion in the defence of “the fundamental values of society” (God, the homeland and the family)’ (Šantić 2002). Two centre-right dailies (*Večernji list* and *Slobodna Dalmacija*), however, reported the audience’s behaviour as a spontaneous expression of popular emotion.

Slobodna Dalmacija in particular was uncritical of moments singled out by *Novi list* (a liberal daily from Rijeka): Lozina’s presence, chants of ‘Mesić, Gypsy’, singing ‘Srbijo, znaj, svemu je kraj’ (‘Serbia, know it’s the end for everything’) over Thompson’s line ‘Grkinjo, znaj...’ (‘Greek woman, know...’), Ustaša symbols (T-shirts, baseball caps, insignia) in the audience, and the singing of *Evo zore, evo dana* (Gospodnetić 2002; Krželj 2002). Thompson did not himself participate in *Evo zore*, but *Slobodna Dalmacija* reported that he condoned the singing by saying ‘I’m glad you’re keeping up authentic tradition’ (Gospodnetić 2002). By Thompson’s next concert in Zagreb (October 2002), the media’s chief interest was not in the concert’s content but in young people wearing or bringing Ustaša logos or slogans: at stake was the public narrative of Croatia’s history of statehood and whether it should include or exclude the NDH. The national prominence of *EMN* and the Poljud concert accelerated Thompson’s incorporation into ‘anti-nationalist’ (Jansen 2005a:88) discourses as a central symbol of the uncultured nationalist Other. However, aspects of Thompson’s music and biography enabled this by situating him within value judgements based on existing frameworks of regional and urban identity.

¹³⁸ The *Lijepa li si* singers have remained linked, usually taking part in Thompson’s annual Oluja celebration in Čavoglave and sometimes in other charity concerts. Thompson, Škoro and Mate Bulić also share commitments as ‘kum’ (best man/godfather).

4.2 Folk, urbanity and Thompson

Responses to Thompson were affected by long-standing associations in ex-Yugoslav culture which viewed showbusiness folk music as a 'Balkan' cultural form and rock as 'Western' and/or 'European' (3.3). Pre-1990s rock/folk symbolism already reflected the 'basic social oppositions' of urban vs. rural/semi-urban (Gordy 1999:136) which had emerged when large numbers of internal migrants moved to Yugoslav cities during socialist industrialisation but did not fully integrate into city ways of life (Rihtman-Auguštin 1988:94). 1980s youth subculture opposed rock (or punk) to folk and dismissed folk as belonging to 'the countryside' rather than 'the West' (Prca 1991:40). In the 1990s, people who made sense of their surroundings through the myth of semi-urbanity added a new layer clarifying contemporary events. In the updated myth, their own country's authoritarian regime had been helped to power by 'sympathisers from rural environments', including city residents who still nurtured rural mentalities, and they as well as the enemy regime were to blame for the 'nationalist wars' (Jansen 2005a:112–3). Another symbolic pole – nationalism/tolerance – thus joined the existing poles of musical value judgements.

Thompson's music incorporated many folk signifiers: his vocals, his instruments (e.g. bagpipes), and his representations of place, which depended on NCFM conventions and techniques. His personal attachment to a village reinforced the associations. Professional music critics aligned themselves with 'rock' and interpreted Thompson's music through this framework: e.g. Zlatko Gall commented that "Thompson's recipe" showed that 'what we have wanted to sort out for a long time, the Balkans, the orient, the village, the East... has come back at its first opportunity, like a boomerang' (Rašeta 1993). Ilko Čulić (1999a) included Thompson as one of six 1990s models of 'new Croatian folk song'. The reaction against 'village primitivism' (Jansen 2005a:113) helps explain why music critics largely rejected Thompson's celebration of patriotism and village life. Čulić (1999b), for instance, wrote that Thompson's song *Geni kameni* (*Stone genes*) had 'erased any thought of urban identity'. 'Stone genes' metaphorised generations of Croats' unchanging identity, but also connoted the mountainous geography of Thompson's home. Its middle eight emphasised persistent primordial values by blending the kolo from Jakov Gotovac's 1930s 'Dinaric opera' *Ero s onoga svijeta* (*Ero from that other world*) with metal guitar riffs. Thompson pointed out the frequent ambiguity in Croatian usage of 'folk' ('narodni') when he called himself 'a folk singer insofar as the people [narod] listen to me' but condemned listening to 'eastern' and 'Serb' folk songs as 'shameful because of the people who suffered [in the war], who were left without their roofs and their loved ones' (Morić 1998a).

Thompson's relationship to his native region's folk culture, including epic traditions of heroic and 'hajduk' imagery, was extremely positive. Whereas (following Stjepan Radić's ideology) the peasantry were frequently seen as the source of Croatian national culture (Uzelac 2006:137), Croatian acceptance of hajduk symbolism was patchy, since Tuđman's official nationalism based on the legitimacy of state authority had cast Serb rebels in a negative outlaw/hajduk role. However, Croats from regions with stronger historical experience of Ottoman rule maintained a positive view of the hajduk as the Christian peasantry's hero resisting Turkish despotism (Žanić 2007:187). The conceptual border between ex-Habsburg and ex-Ottoman regions of Croatia was a common dividing line for the Balkan/European constructions discussed above (Razsa and Lindstrom 2004:637). Thompson's Dalmatinska zagora fell on the ex-Ottoman side where epic/gusle traditions remained familiar.

Thompson's imagery often recalled epic settings. His 2002 song *Iza devet sela* (*Past nine villages*) located his birthplace amid the wolves, fairies, hajduks and falcons of epic consciousness – plus a melody from Abba's *Super troupier*. *Čavoglave* had included a 'message from St Elijah' to the Serbs ('poruku od Svetog Ilije'), Elijah being another epic image amalgamated with pre-Christian traditions of a thunder god (Žanić 2007:96). Thompson also tapped into a common epic-revival discourse when he mentioned Elijah's protection of Čavoglave and other villages 'where the Croatian banner [barjak] waves' (Marković 1992). 'Barjak', unlike the alternative 'zastava', was a 'stylistically marked' word for 'flag' connoting 'antiquity and tradition', not in use outside epic poetry – or nationalist leaders' political speech (Žanić 2007:340). However, hajduk symbolism operated more deeply when Thompson began to oppose the government (disputing HDZ's Bosnia policy, then openly insulting Račan). It was perhaps little wonder Ilko Čulić (2002c) called Thompson's characteristic sound 'hajduk rock'.

The Split singer-songwriter Zlatan Stipišić-Gibonni was sometimes constructed as an opposite pole to Thompson (Čulić 1999b). Gibonni too drew on local tradition, especially in videos dominated by archaised images of small Dalmatian coastal towns. Moreover, Gibonni, like Thompson, was forthcoming about the inspiration of his Catholic faith. However, he called himself a 'left Catholic' and regarded Christianity's basic lesson as social consciousness/tolerance, regretting that 'we turn it into folklore' and lose sight of its essence (Rogošić 1999). Both singers thus based their value systems on Catholicism but arrived at opposite results. Gibonni also differed from Thompson in his approach to tradition itself: Gibonni's sources had first been collected and classified by city-dwelling

experts, including his own father (the respected Dalmatian folklorist Ljubo Stipišić-Delmata). This extra mediation and distance may have helped distinguish Gibonni's relationship to tradition from Thompson's supposedly uncritical/uneducated approach. Gibonni, unlike Thompson, could overcome the critical ambivalence to folk tradition, assisted by decades of symbolism separating 'Mediterranean' Dalmatia from its 'Balkan' wild hinterland (see Rihtman-Auguštin 1999:112).¹³⁹

Critics' responses to *EMN* concentrated on Thompson's political significance, and usually disapproved (Gall 2002; Jergović 2002a; Zima 2002). Perceptions of Thompson as a 'nationalist' overlapped with well-established myths of his region as a centre of hard-line nationalism, low cultural education and macho gender relations. Aspects of Thompson's own music, like *Iza devet sela's* hajduk imagery, could themselves be taken as restating these myths. However, historical memory of/about Zagora/Herzegovina also fed into the readings: besides their Ottoman experiences, parts of the region(s) were also known for their association with the Ustaša movement and had supplied many leading Ustaše (Tanner 2001:154). With or without justification, they thus had a reputation as 'Ustaša' regions. Information which seemed to connect Thompson to Ustaša revivalism therefore drew on and contributed to the perceptual link between place and extremism.

4.3 Nationalism, extremism and the NDH

4.3.1 *Jasenovac i Gradiška Stara, 2003–04*

Three events in 2003–04 publicly raised the question of whether Thompson supported fascist ideologies or celebrated the memory of the NDH, including its terror against Serbs, Jews, Roma and political opponents. When Thompson performed in Zagreb in February 2003 to welcome the Croatian handball team, a group of audience members greeted Čavoglave's 'za dom spremni' introduction with raised-fist salutes. Venue owners asked him to cancel two concerts in Amsterdam and Rotterdam in November 2003 after protests from a Jewish group, and the incident was usually remembered as Thompson being 'banned in the Netherlands'. Finally, the online magazine *Index* obtained a recording of Thompson allegedly singing a song called *Jasenovac i Gradiška Stara* (*Jasenovac and Stara Gradiška*) about the NDH concentration-camps. Thompson claimed the scandal had been

¹³⁹ If not centuries of symbolism (Schäuble, forthcoming): see Wolff (1994:318–24) on Venetian ideas about the hinterland's barbarian 'Morlacchi'.

concocted to discredit him, but his popularity among young people was nonetheless treated as a social problem and approached the level of a 'moral panic' (Perasović 2006).

During the *Index* case internet users petitioned the media and Croatia Records to sever their links with Thompson, the Croatian Bishops' Conference distanced itself from him, and several organisations including Croatian PEN and the Jasenovac museum called for the public display of Ustaša symbols to be banned. Thompson primarily responded through his website:

I'm not the author of those songs [e.g. *JGS*] but I have sung them, as we all know [...] together with hundreds of thousands of Croats during the Homeland War when Četnik aggression threatened the very survival of the Croatian state and people (Thompson.hr 2004a).

Singing 'those songs' to the enemy had expressed 'spite [inat], 'defiance [bunt] and determination', and successfully 'drove fear into them'. The songs had been revived '[a]fter 3 January 2000 when Croatia stumbled and the Communists grabbed power', humiliating veterans and eminent figures (Thompson 2004a). Another statement condemned the current-affairs show *Latinica* playing *JGS* over archive concentration-camp footage. Thompson said this had 'sent us back 40–50 years and evoked [...] the fake trials carried out after 1945 against Croatian patriots, Church dignitaries and other citizens undesirable to the then regime' (Thompson.hr 2004b).

Speaking to *Večernji list*, Thompson distinguished *JGS* from his own songs because it was not his 'authorial work' and reiterated his online statements (Oremović 2004). However, the limits of his control over his star-image were evident. His interventions may have helped perpetuate the myth of Communist persecution of Croatian culture among his core supporters, but did not significantly affect the general public or media response. Indeed, liberal columnists ended up with more material for their attacks: e.g., Boris Dežulović (2004) wrote that Četniks could have identically justified their notorious song on entering Vukovar. Coverage of Thompson's next public appearance, at a fundraising concert in June 2004 to rebuild a church in Škabrnja, maintained the case's dominant frame: how much Ustaša iconography was visible in the audience and whether the singers encouraged people to sing Ustaša songs.

Information about Ustaša songs online had been available for some time – *Feral* had mentioned it in 2002 – but had not previously caused any outcry (Senjković and Dukić 2005:44–5). Even before the *Index* case there had been casual press references to Thompson singing certain NDH songs: the Herzegovinan edition of *Slobodna Dalmacija* had described a Thompson concert in Mostar where many spectators brought 'pictures of great

Croats from Pavelić and Francetić to 'Tuđman and Norac' and Thompson had sung *Evo zore* (along with other songs not mentioning the NDH) with the crowd 'in the original, as our grandfathers also sang them in the forties of the last century [1940s]' (Juka 2003). The brutality of *JGS* may itself have made the story more newsworthy. So too may the Netherlands incidents, when the Thompson 'problem' had reflected on Croatia's international standing.

4.3.2 The NDH in Thompson's ideology

The 'moral panic' surrounding Thompson therefore involved several connected questions:¹⁴⁰ (a) why Thompson was popular among young people; (b) why society tolerated NDH symbols or 'hate speech' in public; (c) how far state institutions (particularly school history teaching) were responsible; (d) how widespread was sympathy for the NDH in Croatia; (e) whether Thompson was 'an Ustaša' and/or 'a fascist'. The direct impression of NDH revivalism at his concerts was the work of certain concert-goers rather than Thompson himself, although Thompson had spoken approvingly of the NDH leader Ante Pavelić on a HTV talk show in 1997. His statements about the NDH, the Ustaša movement and Second World War history were much more revealing in the mid-1990s than later: indeed, his comments to Željka Ogresta in January 1997 led to HTV criticising Ogresta for encouraging the 'impermissible glorification of Ustašism and Pavelić' (Lesinger 1997).¹⁴¹ Thompson seemed to understand Ustašism itself as a Second World War product which could not now exist in the same form, and asked '[h]ow can I be an Ustaša when Ustaše don't exist today?' (Lacković 1997). However, he was proud of receiving pictures of Pavelić and Jure Francetić from diaspora Croats:

They always bow down to them over there. It's like someone coming to Split and you give him a picture of [Split's patron saint] St Dujce. I don't know why a picture of Ante Pavelić would bother anyone? And I don't even know what Ustaša propaganda would be today. (Lacković 1997)

He saw 1940s Ustaše as a legitimate inspiration for Homeland War soldiers:¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ On the wider issues, see Drakulić 1996; Irvine 1997; MacDonald 2002; Bellamy 2003; Brkljačić 2003; Uzelac 2006.

¹⁴¹ However, that month HTV still showed an episode of *Smogovci* (*The Smogovac family*) set during the Homeland War showing protagonists playing *Čavoglave* to captured Serbs (Lesinger 1997). Ogresta's husband Dubravko Merlić, a HTV journalist campaigning for its independence from the state, later implied the affair might have been inflated to pressurise him into accepting a foreign correspondent's job and thus leaving Croatia (Hazardar 1997a).

¹⁴² In 1992, the then HSP vice-president Anto Đapić had described HSP's relationship to the NDH and 'za dom spremni' similarly – HOS were supposedly using it just 'to restore the fighting spirit of the Croatian soldier of the Independent State of Croatia' (Naprt 1992c).

I think the Ustaša was a model to every Croatian soldier at that time, regardless of where he or his granddad belonged before the war. (Lacković 1997)

Thompson's family had also maintained a positive opinion of Ustašism:

my grandfather was in the NDH army from 1941 to 1945. And in my house they always respected pravaštvo [HSP ideology] and the Poglavnik [Pavelić]. (Ivančić 1997b)

In my family the Poglavnik and his idea of the Independent State of Croatia were always respected. I was brought up like that and I'm not ashamed of it. (Lacković 1997)

Thompson's grandfather seemed crucial in Thompson's political upbringing:

I'm just sad my granddad Šimun didn't live to see that flag [a flag of Pavelić's which a Croat-Canadian had promised Thompson]. My granddad died in 1990, happy to have experienced Croatia. He told me about Jure and Boban, about the Poglavnik, about Croatia. (Pahlić 1996)

The Second World War history of Thompson's home village was also significant: it had defended itself both against Serbian royalist (Četnik) forces and Communist Partisans, as acknowledged by a line on *Čavoglave* (2.3.4). Yet Thompson never actually identified the villagers with Ustaše, and indeed stated once that it was not true 'Čavoglave was an Ustaša village' because the villagers had organised their own defence (Majetić 1992).

In contrast to his mid-1990s self-presentation, Thompson did not emphasise his personal or family relationship to NDH memory in 2002–04. Instead, his ideology of national unity extended to reconciling Croats' historical divisions because his generation had fought for Croatia, although deliberate glorifiers of Communism remained beyond reconciliation:

why do young people wear Ustaša symbols? Well, you know what happens on HTV: you see them showing us Partisan films, you see individual politicians and presenters wearing Partisan caps [...] It's clear that young people are revolted and want to answer that. I think they aren't burdened by either Ustaše or Partisans, but they want to be allowed to live their lives. We're the victorious generation which created Croatia and we're those who should be creating wellbeing in the country, no matter what side we were on. (Kljajić 2002)

Thompson now preferred to be identified as a patriot with an audience of patriots. His immediate reaction to the *Index* case was to say that 'I'm not any kind of Ustaša and I've never encouraged anyone into hatred against anyone', but that he was constantly attacked by 'the same team of people who are bothered by my patriotism' (Frlan and Strukar 2003).

After the Netherlands incident, he denied absolutely that he was a Nazi (or a Briton) as apparently reported on television in Amsterdam, instead calling himself ‘a Croat and a patriot’ (Kasalo 2003).

Thompson’s own songs never mentioned the NDH or Pavelić as explicitly as some of his mid-1990s interviews. The closest allusion was the ‘za dom spremni’ shout on *Čavoglave*, though Thompson argued it was historically much older than the NDH. After the handball scandal, he traced it back to two great Croatian leaders:

the salute ‘za dom, za dom!’ was already used by Nikola Šubić Zrinski when he breached the Turkish forces. Is he an Ustaša? Impossible, because that happened a good 400 years before the emergence of the Ustaša movement. The salute ‘spremni!’ was already used in 1074 by one of the greatest Croatian rulers Petar Krešimir IV, who wanted to emphasise that the Croats were prepared to defend their state from Venice. (Thompson.hr 2003b)

Whether or not certain other lyrics related to Ustaše or more broadly to Croats depended on one’s historical interpretation of Yugoslav Communism. When Thompson sang on *Geni kameni* that ‘[19]45 was bad, it spread us around the world’ (‘loša bila 45ta, rasula nas preko svijeta’), did he mean Ustaša loyalists regrouping in the diaspora or the Croat people escaping Tito’s political persecution? General Ivan Tolj, the Ministry of Defence’s chief propagandist, spoke in 1996 about ‘what happened in 1945 to the Croat people, and how that hell lasted from ’45 to [19]90’ (Galić 1996), suggesting that a broader interpretation was possible. A handful of other Thompson songs contained *potential* references to Ustašism: *Moj dida i ja* (*My granddad and I*) remembered the same grandfather who had educated him politically, but no lyrical or visual material connected the line ‘my granddad and I, two friends/a different time, the same destiny’ (‘moj dida i ja, prijatelja dva/drugo vrijeme, ista sudbina’) to their military careers, let alone the NDH.¹⁴³ The warning on *Reci, brate moj* that ‘a heavy mist will fall again’ (‘opet će se gusta magla spustiti’) could not be explained away quite so easily, given the similarity to the title of the NDH song *Spustila se gusta magla iznad Zagreba* (*A heavy mist fell over Zagreb*) where the ‘mist’ was actually the Poglavnik’s brave army (‘hrabra vojska Poglavnikova’).

4.3.3 Ustaša ideology in popular music

Certain other Croatian singers had identified themselves more unambiguously than Thompson with Ustašism, especially during the Homeland War. Dražen Zečić, who served in the 4th Guards Brigade and 72 Battalion of the military police, recorded *Evo zore*

¹⁴³ None of my informants associated this with Thompson’s grandfather fighting for the NDH.

in 1992 for a market-stall cassette with a B-side called *Sve do Zemuna* (*All the way to Zemun*) (Pukanić 1992b).¹⁴⁴ In 1993 Zečić called it ‘an Ustaša song which says Serbia ought to be burned down’ – which he agreed with – and said that his father had been an Ustaša imprisoned for eight years (i.e. by the Communists) after the war. However, he denied (like Thompson) that he was an Ustaša because the term was now inapplicable:

No, I’m a Croat, and Ustaša [is what] the Četniks, Serbs and Yugoslav centralists [orjunaši] who wish for Belgrade call me. They used to call people who went to church Ustaše. Ustaše existed in 1941, now there aren’t any. (Vulić 1993)

Both Zečić and Thompson saw active service and became popular as a result of patriotic songs, although Zečić did not incorporate his wartime career into his post-war public persona nor record patriotic music after the war.

Other performers too directly presented themselves as 1990s Ustaše. A HOS member and bodyguard named Boško Landeka, who enjoyed a brief recording career, was probably the most unambiguous ‘neo-Ustaša’ in Croatian music (2.2.6). Jadranko Lešina Panta, from Osijek, also recorded songs like *Svi smo mi Ustaše* (*We are all Ustaše*) for soldiers in Herzegovina and Posavina (Rizvanović 1994), although a few years later was performing narodnjaci (Miličević 1998). Mario Mihaljević, the composer of *Hrvatine* and a wartime HSP press spokesman, associated himself with Ustaša tradition afterwards when he said that his Croatian football anthem ‘was based on the principles of the greatest Croatian victorious songs, like “Evo zore, evo dana” about the knights Jure and Boban’ (Maksimović 1997b). The above examples offered more detailed present-day support for Ustašism than Thompson’s recorded music.

Judging whether Thompson deliberately promoted Ustašism also requires a definition of Ustaša ideology. Many components of Pavelić’s ideology were radicalised versions of earlier nationalist ideologies – anti-intellectualism based on an idea of the authentic peasant nation, a cult of statehood for which even death was an acceptable price – and its innovation was introducing the racism of German Nazism and Italian Fascism into Croatian nationalism (Uzelac 2006:159–60). Yet one right-wing perspective held that Ustaša symbols and fascist symbols were not identical. The writer Dubravko Horvatić distinguished them ‘because the Ustaša struggle was first and foremost a struggle against

¹⁴⁴ An early HSP war aim had been expanding Croatia as far as Zemun, across the river from Belgrade. An internal army report on Zečić’s brigade printed by *Globus* in 1999 stated: ‘We all know well that Mr Zečić goes around singing even the occasional Ustaša song at his concerts in halls and nightclubs which badly damages the Rep[ublic] of Croatia because of the international public’ and that the battalion commander had done nothing about it (Cigoj 1999a).

Serb imperialism, and not for German national-socialism or Italian Fascism' (Lukić 2002). Tuđman's defence minister Gojko Šušak had similarly denied that there had been a fascist party in Croatia during the NDH (Bellamy 2003:71). However, according to Ivo Žanić (1994), the practical meaning of 'Ustaša' cannot be separated from its historical context and has to include the NDH's 'barbaric methods' as well as 'the righteous aspiration for statehood'. Two irreconcilable interpretations of Ustašism and the NDH were therefore at work.

Thompson did not consider himself an extremist, but claimed to speak for the whole Croatian people, strongly emphasising Catholic values.¹⁴⁵ The internal-enemy discourse throws up a paradox in claims to speak for the entire nation, since ethnic Croats who have betrayed the nation by adopting foreign goals and values are excluded from the people in practice and the nation ends up politically defined (Uzelac 2006:226–7). Thompson, Tuđman, Ante Pavelić (the NDH leader) and the influential 19th-century nationalist Ante Starčević (founder of the first HSP) have all used this rhetoric. Thompson's ideology has sometimes identified its enemies (*EMN*'s 'antichrists, Communists and Masons' or the 'vampired Communists' of his *JGS* statement) and sometimes metaphorised them (e.g. as conspirators against King Zvonimir). The result is a narrative of conflict between 'the Croat people' and enemies, rather than acknowledgement that one 'people' can accommodate different values and political options.

A definition of fascism like Roger Eatwell's, which classifies it as 'an attempt to create a holistic-national radical Third Way' without necessarily defending 'past dictatorships' (Eatwell 1995:xxiii), might be wide enough to include Thompson, although his intense Catholic faith would exclude him from some wider ideas of fascism as anti-clerical (see Griffin 1998:8). Yet within right-wing Croatian understandings of fascism as a foreign/transnational ideology, it would be inappropriate to classify Thompson as 'a fascist': his historical and political views were based on earlier Croatian ideologies, not primarily on wider European ones, and he most directly associated himself with Ante Starčević's ideology of 'pravaštvo'.¹⁴⁶ As to whether Thompson was 'an Ustaša', he himself publicly ruled that out as a present-day political identification. However, he did appear to come from a family background with strong sympathies for the Ustaša movement's Second

¹⁴⁵ Mark Biondich (2007:396) argues that Pavelić was not directly interested 'in revivifying Croatia through Catholic principles' but in deriving legitimacy from the Croatian Catholic Church's support. Catholicism seems better integrated into Thompson's ideology than into Biondich's instrumental view of the NDH.

¹⁴⁶ Yet 19th-century nationalists like Starčević still drew on transnational thought about race and language (see Carmichael 2002).

World War role, and had also expressed admiration for Ante Pavelić in the mid-1990s. The extent to which he discussed this as part of his public image varied with political and commercial circumstances, and became much less likely as his star status increased.

In 2006, the marketing of Thompson's next album illustrated the tensions between what he and Croatia Records saw as desirable meanings in his star image and the meanings drawn by many journalists and members of the public from the components of his star text. Although CR expected Thompson to be a first-class domestic star, the *Index* case had compromised his image, and in the meantime Miroslav Škoro's success had shown that one could convey politics and war memory a similar way but without Thompson's connotations of extremism. Škoro's biographical narrative was subtler, drawing on his regional belonging more than his wartime actions. However, he expressed his chief preoccupation – support for Croatian war crimes indictees – the same way as other patriotic musicians or non-musical campaigns for the indictees.

4.4 Popular music and the Hague Tribunal protests: Miroslav Škoro and Niko Bete

Miroslav Škoro's albums and concerts were heavily promoted after 2000, his singles usually had videos produced for television airplay, and Škoro himself served as the director of Croatia Records from 2001 to 2005. By comparison, Niko Bete sold far fewer albums, did not appear in the press, and recorded some of his patriotic songs as direct commissions. However, their justifications of the indictees' innocence and their representations of historical memory were very similar, except for their attitudes to the NDH and Communism. While Bete's lyrics left no doubt that he sympathised with the Ustaše and viewed Communists and Partisans as enemies of the Croatian people, Škoro avoided this period and referred only to the medieval/early-modern era or the Homeland War itself. Škoro thus contributed to the ideological construct of patriotic showbusiness but presented it as a less marginal political option. However, his claim to a centrist political identity was often not accepted. Dislike of Thompson usually entailed dislike of Škoro on the grounds that both belonged to the same worldview.

4.4.1 Miroslav Škoro

Škoro's post-2000 patriotic career began in 2002 when he invited Thompson onto *Reci, brate moj*. His solo patriotic songs, e.g. *Sude mi* (*They're trying me*), dealt with the nation's

betrayal of heroes (especially indicted officers), but did not attribute blame to identifiable political or religious enemies. Škoro frequently compared modern-day heroes to knights, such as a 'knight of my clan' who was 'chained in a far-off land' because his 'brothers had betrayed' him,¹⁴⁷ and lamented:

Sude mi zato što svoje volim, volim najviše
Što sam branio moje najdraže¹⁴⁸

This knight's actions were justified, whatever he was meant to have done, because their aims were defensive. The same logic operated in the campaigns 'for the truth about the Homeland War' which lobbied for Gotovina and others. The former constitutional judge Vice Vukojević's opinion that Croats could not have committed war crimes in a defensive war lived on in the version of war memory which dominated the anti-indictment protests and their soundtrack.

Škoro commonly used historical parallels with early modern Croatia to support his arguments about the present day. His 2005 song *Plati piće* (*Buy a drink*) compared Homeland War volunteers and veterans to the 17th-century noblemen Nikola Zrinski and Fran Krsto Frankopan (executed after their rebellion against the Habsburgs) and epic heroes in general. It was framed as a story:

O čovjeku s kraja prošlog stoljeća
Kad su zemljom tekle suze, krv i znoj
A junaka bilo k'o u pjesmi narodnoj¹⁴⁹

Its chorus incorporated a line from Frankopan's poem *Pozivanje na vojsku* (*Call to arms*), 'Navik živi onaj ki zgine pošteno' ('he who falls honourably lives forever'). Frankopan's words, 'written in stone' ('na kamenu slova pišu'), gave the protagonist the strength to overcome physical wounds but not the painful 'lies and tricks' ('laži i prevare') he had since endured. Like 1990s discourse, the song claimed continuity between the past and the present based on an enduring heroic tradition. Understanding the present war as a continuation of past wars gave the present conflict the past's 'mythic dimension' and transferred their legitimacy to the present (Čolović 1994:97). Memorialising the Zrinski/Frankopan execution extended the mythic equivalence to suit post-Tuđman oppositional patriotism: betrayal, as well as war, was to be understood as cyclical.

¹⁴⁷ 'vitez roda moga u dalekoj zemlji okovan [...] i da su me braća izdala'.

¹⁴⁸ 'They're trying me because I love my own [land/people] the most/because I was defending what was dearest to me'.

¹⁴⁹ 'About a man from the end of the last century/when tears, blood and sweat ran through the land/and there were heroes like in a folk song'.

Škoro's major 2005 hit *Svetinja* (*Sacred object*) explicitly linked Croatian victimisation with Christ's passion:

Kakvo je to došlo vrijeme, i brat brata vara
Kud nas vode loše sluge loših gospodara
Svaka laž je trn u kruni mojih predaka, a gdje je istina?¹⁵⁰

The link was even clearer in the video, with images of Christ on the cross as well as a burned-out village and fur-hatted horsemen pursuing a lone rider.

The song's three 'svetinje', 'faith, love and the homeland' ('vjera, ljubav i domovina'), resembled Thompson's 'God, the family and the homeland' ('Bog, obitelj i domovina'). However, Škoro's off-stage persona demonstrated a different understanding of national 'svetinje', rooted in ever-present reminders of nationhood:

Faith [...] The family. The passport. The flag. National days. The anthem. The Croatian soldier's historical uniform. The Republic of Croatia's constitution. The banking system [...]. (Oremović 2005)

Škoro's reasons for believing in Gotovina's innocence relied on intellectual and legal legitimacy, whereas Thompson's approach to war memory was based on tradition and common sense. Škoro stated:

I've read the indictment against General Gotovina and the other Croatian generals. In those indictments I don't see a wish to individualise guilt by those who are accusing him and the other Croatian generals. They just mention very general and generalised platitudes which don't mention what the said general did. (Grubišić 2005)

But he was still aware of the historical cycle of heroism and betrayal:

Ante Gotovina is neither the first nor the last man of the Croatian people who [someone] has tried to accuse in order to justify other people's actions [...] Don't let's talk just about the 700 Hague indictees, but let's also talk about Matija Gubec, Andrija Hebrang, and Frankopan and Zrinski.¹⁵¹ (Ivić 2005a)

Škoro's media discussions of history and politics were important for his credibility, since his 'star image' was hardly as striking or authentic as Thompson's: during the 1990s he had

¹⁵⁰ 'What kind of time has come, even brother is cheating brother/where are the bad masters' bad servants leading us/every lie is a thorn in my forefathers' crown, but where's the truth?'

¹⁵¹ Gubec, a 16th-century peasant leader, had already been placed in 'the pantheon of martyrs fighting for the Croatian state' by 1930s Ustaše (Pavlaković 2004:734). Hebrang, a Communist who established the powerful liberation council in Croatia (ZAVNOH), had incurred Tito's jealousy and been arrested during purges after the 1948 Tito–Stalin split. National-unification ideology accepted both Partisans and Ustaše as contributors to Croatia's statehood tradition if they had ultimately been working towards a Croatian state. Škoro's reference to Hebrang was more praise than Thompson had ever afforded a Communist (or Škoro an Ustaša).

worked as a consul-general and a record executive. Nonetheless, Škoro and Thompson complemented each other as performers, perhaps because the combination of their personae evoked a common duality in national thought. Ivan Mažuranić's view of Croatian history in his poem 'Vjekovi Ilirije' ('The ages of Illyria') had involved both times of peace, symbolised by the tamburica, and signs of war, symbolised by the gusle (Žanić 2007:63). Moreover, the tamburica further connoted Slavonia and the plains while the gusle connoted the Dinaric highlands. The Škoro–Thompson partnership evoked this duality and that between the intellectual and the warrior. The ranks of 'great Croatians' had room not just for heroes, but for those who developed the nation's historical consciousness by writing about them (Bellamy 2003:152).

Škoro did not make political statements to the same extent as Thompson, and rarely needed to defend himself against charges of extremism, except for the 'thick fog' line in *Reci, brate moj* – often a slogan on unofficial Thompson T-shirts. Škoro explained that he had used it because 'the little man' could not protect himself from fog like he could other sorts of bad weather (Tomasović 2002). The Škoro/Thompson contrast was noted by Miljenko Jergović (2005), who termed Škoro 'the Thompson of the new government' because he – like Ivo Sanader compared to Tuđman – avoided the most divisive elements of right-wing ideology. When Škoro commented on politics, he did so as a family man and a member of the 'silent majority' who respected:

certain values which are traditionally rooted in the normal Croatian family and the majority of us are defined by those values. But there also exists a very 'loud minority' who have an awful lot of power to penetrate and control part of the media, where they present their attitudes as those of the majority. (Grubišić 2005)

This description of Croatian politics resembled US conservatism more than the struggle between good and evil in Thompson's political commentaries. Moreover, Škoro himself distanced himself from 'extremism', as when asked to describe his political orientation in 2003:

The centre. My worldview doesn't put up with any extremes in life, so not in politics either. I have the honour to belong to the victorious generation of the Croatian people. Any deviation, any extremism, isn't good for this country. (Peršić 2003)

However, this presupposed that respect for the Homeland War characterised the political centre rather than the right (whereas Thompson, who also referred to the 'victorious generation', was happy to associate himself with 'the right').

Music critics and rock musicians nonetheless responded to Škoro and Thompson with the framework. Aleksandar Dragaš (2006b) often argued that ‘the two turbo-Croats share the same audience with turbofolk’, and complained (2006a) that Škoro was a far bigger star of ‘Croatian folk’ music than the internationally-acclaimed blues musician Miroslav Evačić from Podravina. Sejo Sexon from Zabranjeno Pušenje joked at the expense of ‘these people who listen to Škoro and Thompson’ and did not cause piracy problems because ‘they’re still using Digitron [outdated calculators]’ (Lasić 2006a) – although Croatia Records was not so confident about Thompson’s immunity to piracy, and released his 2006 album with DRM protection. To committed ‘anti-nationalists’, the discernible distinctions between Thompson and Škoro did not make much difference. Both singers were held responsible for promoting nationalist values and using folk music inauthentically.

4.4.2 Niko Bete

Niko Bete’s music illustrated an alternative approach to representing politics and war memory within the same field of patriotic discourse. Bete had not had a mainstream wartime hit like Škoro or Thompson, although his song *Hercegovci za dom spremni* (*Herzegovinans ready for the Home*) had appeared on a market-stall patriotic compilation in 1993 (Vlašić 1993) and he had recorded an anthem for the HOS 9th Brigade. Although he released three albums between 2000 and 2004, his best-known song was the official pro-Gotovina anthem *Ante, Ante, svi smo za te* (*We’re all with you, Ante*), which circulated on various compilation cassettes and online. Bete came from Konavle or Dubrovnik, though chose to sing about Dalmatia as a whole rather than Dubrovnik itself (unlike a much more famous Dubrovnik singer, Tereza Kesovija, who narrated her own wartime victimhood: 2.3.1). Rarely participating in media promotion, he lacked a public persona like Thompson’s or Škoro’s, and had little to do with mainstream showbusiness until 2004, when he entered Juraj Hrvačić’s Croatian Radio Festival (HRF) and released an album *Živim i ljubim narod svoj* (*I live and love my people*). That year he also supported, or was commissioned to support, the presidential campaign of the former general Ljubo Cesić-Rojs. Bete’s songs occupied most of Rojs’s promotional CD *S predsjednikom na posao* (*To work with the president*), and Rojs even won himself a glowing article in *Slobodna Dalmacija* by promising to accompany Bete to HRF as a backing vocalist (Pavić 2004).

The Rojs–Bete project indicated how popular music could be used as a form of political communication. Ivo Žanić has shown how new epic gusle songs operated as ‘a parallel information and communication network’ alongside mainstream journalism and related

current events to the categories of epic poetry (Žanić 2007:93). Gusle was indeed involved in the Rojs project too (two songs were by Mile Krajina). However, music such as Bete's songs for Norac and Gotovina suggests that Žanić's observations could be extended to other forms of popular music which grounded themselves in the the gusle-playing region's folk/epic traditions but might be more attractive to younger generations of listeners – the very message of Thompson's *Geni kameni*.

Bete recorded one song for Gotovina and two for Norac.¹⁵² His representations of both generals were consistent, giving the sources of their strength, describing their exploits against the 'Četniks' and affirming their legendary status. Thus Gotovina had learned his 'lessons [...] in how to become a man, how to win a battle' while 'in the foreign world' ('učija si škole po stranome svitu/kako postat' čovik, kako dobit' bitku') – an allusion to his French Foreign Legion service, which Nenad Ivanković's biography had established as his formative experience (Ivanković 2001). He had 'led all the Flashes and Storms, chased away the Četniks' ('vodija si sve Bljeske i Oluje/protjerao si četnike'), making him a 'war hero' ('heroj rata') and 'the Croats' legend' ('legenda Hrvata'). More folkloric symbolism was attached to Norac, who came from Sinj and had acted as 'Duke of the Alka' (Sinj's jousting competition) for several years. One song, *Mirko Norac*, had a semi-historical, semi-magical narrative about how 'hordes, gangs and Četniks' had plundered 'everything not sacred to them' ('sve što im sveto nije') and taken it to Serbia. Norac had been deployed as the Croats' saviour thanks to a syncretic treaty of mutual assistance between the Fairy of Velebit and Our Lady of Sinj:

Poručila, poručila vila Velebita
Sinjska Gospo, sinjska Gospo, šalji mi vojnika
Ne vojnika, ne vojnika, vojvodu ja ti šaljem
I svoj sveti, i svoj sveti blagoslov mu dajem¹⁵³

The other Norac song, *Na zapovijed, generale* (*At your command, general*), began with the Duke's ritual opening of the Alka, the traditional fanfare and the sound of galloping horses, merging with an electric guitar riff in 7/8 time like Thompson's *Čavoglave*. This Norac's progress was much like Gotovina's: he had 'led his people through Vukovar, Dubrovnik, flashes and storms' ('Vukovara, Dubrovnika, kroz bljeskove i oluje/vodija si svoje ljudi'), Our Lady of Sinj had protected him from evil ('od svakoga zla čuvala te Gospa sinjska'),

¹⁵² Both Norac songs are usually called *Mirko Norac* online. See Schäuble (in press), which draws on my earlier discussion of them (Baker 2006b).

¹⁵³ 'The fairy of Velebit sent a message/Lady of Sinj, send me a soldier/I'm not sending you a soldier, but a duke/and I'm giving him my holy blessing'. Fairies in epic poetry inspire and watch over heroes (Žanić 2007:100), a function which is often transferred to various aspects of the Madonna.

and the Croatian people would forever celebrate him ('slavit će te narod hrvatski'). The Alka signifies an 'ethics of heroism and self-sacrifice' (Schäuble 2006:2) in the local narrative of identity, and in narratives which extrapolate it to a national level. It was also an important site in the right-wing protest narrative after the audience had jeered Mesić in 2001 (Erözden 2008). A concert had been held before the 2001 Alka featuring Thompson, Mate Bulić, Dražen Žanko and Bete, who had just recorded one of the Norac songs (Hudelist 2001a). The interest groups who organised the Alka, at least, experienced these singers as ideologically consistent.

Bete was more explicit than Thompson about the Second World War and the Communist period: while Thompson restricted himself to stating that '[19]45 was bad' (*Geni kameni*); Bete explained why, especially on his 2004 song *Zapjevaj* (*Sing*). This narrator had lost his grandfather and uncle during the war when they were fighting for the (Croatian) Home with a song on their lips:

Ne pamti mi mater ćaću, a ni brata svog
Poginuli su za Dom ljeta dalekog
Na usnama pjesma bila i do zadnjega¹⁵⁴

The said song was *Evo zore*, which they had sung 'from Bleiburg field to Goli otok' ('od Bleiburškog polja do Golog otoka'), i.e. from the site of the Partisans' massacre of prisoners to the Communist prison camp.¹⁵⁵ Although *Zapjevaj* did not mention Ustaše, Pavelić or the NDH, *Evo zore* associated the soldiers unambiguously with Ustašism.

Bete did not just argue for commemorating past soldiers but also for their continued relevance in the present. Their role as a symbol of Croatian defiance had persisted into the 1990s, when Bete remembered his comrades' sacrifices at Vukovar:

Na tu priču mislio sam devedesetih
Pa se sjetih Vukovara i prijatelja svih
Orila se pjesma iz sveg grla na sav glas
Bog je čuvao junake, bio je uz nas¹⁵⁶

Patriotic showbusiness (and its regionally-rooted predecessors) had often used images of songs, 'old songs', 'our songs' and communal singing (with or without wine) to symbolise the ritual performance of tradition and belonging to the birthplace/nation. Bete's chorus

¹⁵⁴ 'My mum doesn't remember her dad or her brother/they died for the Home one summer long ago/a song was on their lips to the last'.

¹⁵⁵ Bleiburg figured in Croatian nationalist mythology as a symbol of Communist repression of the Croats (MacDonald 2002:170). Goli otok, like Bleiburg, had been covered up by the socialist regime (Dragović-Soso 2002:82).

¹⁵⁶ 'I thought of that story in the nineties/and I remembered Vukovar and all the friends/the song roared out loud from every throat/God protected the heroes, he was with us'.

thus told the addressee to ‘sing up, and don’t be afraid/nobody can forbid us a song’ (‘zapjevaj sad i ne boj se/zabranit nam pjesmu nitko ne može’).¹⁵⁷ Bete was equally uncompromising about Communists. His 2000 song *Za šaku dolara* (*For a fistful of dollars*) suggested an anti-Communist family upbringing:

A dosta mi je svega, ljudi, svako hoće da nam sudi
Neki kažu smrt fašizmu, to ne piše u katekizmu
Učili me moji stari¹⁵⁸

The value-system might be consistent with a family history of fighting against the Partisans (like Thompson’s or Zečić’s), but since Bete did not fill out his ‘star text’ with off-stage information through the media one can only guess at his own family circumstances. He returned to the anti-Communism theme in 2004 with the song *Dva drugara* (*Two comrades*), mocking the popular Communist cartoon characters Mirko and Slavko.¹⁵⁹ The two comrades (identified by samples during the introduction) turn left in the forest and are captured by ‘bearded faces we know well’ (‘lica bradata svima dobro poznata’) – the caricature of Četniks and Serbs – where they meet an unspecified unhappy end. The song was arranged like a *čoček* (a Serbian dance played on trumpets) to reinforce the association with Serbia.

4.4.3 The Gotovina campaign

Škoro, Bete and Thompson differed in the parts of the historical narrative they emphasised but did not contradict each other, even though Škoro remained circumspect about the Second World War while Thompson and Bete found positive expressions of Croatian values in that period. All three agreed on the most immediate political issues: Homeland War memory (betrayed) and the status of indicted officers (innocent heroes). Škoro and Thompson also promoted these issues non-musically: Thompson with his annual celebration of the Oluja anniversary in Čavoglave, and Škoro as a member of the board of the Foundation for the Truth about the Homeland War founded in December 2005.¹⁶⁰ *Feral*’s Viktor Ivančić (2006) was sceptical of the Foundation’s claim to ‘truth’, and argued

¹⁵⁷ This album had been being prepared during 2004: did the ‘banning of songs’ relate to the concurrent JGS scandal?

¹⁵⁸ I’ve had enough of it all, people, everyone wants to try us/some say “Death to fascism” [well-known Titoist slogan], it doesn’t say that in the catechism my parents taught me’.

¹⁵⁹ Dubravka Ugrešić (1998:5) discusses the Mirko and Slavko cartoons as just the sort of positive personal memory of socialist Yugoslavia that Tuđman wanted people to deny.

¹⁶⁰ His first party-political involvement came in November 2007 when he appeared on the HDZ electoral list for Slavonia – itself a relatively centrist act in comparison to Thompson’s political engagement. Later he ran for mayor of Osijek. Thompson never ran for parliament, but supported HSP and the ideology of ‘pravaštvo’ in general.

that its underlying aim was to prove that the Hague Tribunal was putting the entire idea of 'the Croatian defensive war' on trial rather than trying individuals. Its 'truth' was nonetheless the same 'truth' to which Škoro subscribed.

Ivan Šiber has suggested that Gotovina's flight from justice framed him within 'the traditional culture where you have heroes who are outside the law' (Šiber in Šantić 2005), i.e. within the cult of the hajduk as rightful avenger (Čolović 2004b:257). Hajduks are directly evoked in songs such as Bete's *Živim i ljubim narod svoj* and Thompson's *Iza devet sela*. Žanić (2007:187) notes that the hajduk-as-avenger discourse was most common among Bosnian Croats and diverged from Croatian state discourse. Hajduk evocations can therefore be another powerful marker which associates patriotic showbusiness with the place-myths of Herzegovina and Dinara. Interestingly, Škoro (from Slavonia not Herzegovina/Dinara) did not use hajduks in his historical mythology. His depiction of history was nonetheless syncretic:

From today's connotations, *Sude mi* is a song about Norac and Gotovina, but for me it's a song about the crucified Homeland, about Zrinski and Frankopan going to Wiener Neustadt to get their heads cut off, about Matija Gubec... (Oremović 2005)

Škoro's politicised repertoire concerned all these figures and none. If the historical figures of Zrinski, Frankopan, and Gubec can be understood as symbols of Croatian heroic virtue and resistance to oppression – even when Gubec had been rebelling against the very noblemen personified by Frankopan and Zrinski – then their example can justify the actions of Gotovina and his soldiers.¹⁶¹ Even songs with entirely folkloric settings can belong to this matrix, such as Bete's *Vila* (*Fairy*), a romance between a fairy and a knight set 'u prдавnom vremenu kralja Tomislava' ('in the long-ago time of King Tomislav'). At the same time, war-crimes indictees are themselves portrayed as 'knights' (e.g. *Sude mi*), continuing the discourse of Croatian soldiers (and sportsmen) as 'vitezovi'. Norac and Gotovina thus join the continuum of abstract and romanticised Croatian heroism. Knights and fairies help to give contemporary myths 'an aura that is "above suspicion"' when depicted as integral aspects of the same milieu (Senjković and Dukić 2005:55). The violence of contemporary 'knights' can be minimised by removing it into the world of fairy-tale, where Bete's Norac belongs.

¹⁶¹ Cf. how Alka dignitaries used the 'historical foundation myth' of the Alka to comment on contemporary politics (Schäuble, forthcoming).

After four years in hiding, travelling the world on a succession of false passports,¹⁶² Gotovina was arrested in Tenerife and transferred to The Hague in December 2005. The response to his arrest showed that popular music had become an essential communicative tool in the anti-Hague movement. Journalists reporting from the protests often noted crowds singing Bete's *Ante, Ante* or Škoro's *Sude mi* (e.g. Radović 2005) – not to mention the Zagreb secondary school which apparently let pupils play Škoro and Thompson during breaks to express their feelings about Gotovina's arrest (Baković and Maretić 2005).¹⁶³ Placards, posters, punning newspaper headlines, and signatures on internet forums all repeated 'Ante, Ante, svi smo za te' as an emerging figure of speech.¹⁶⁴ If not as widespread as 'Stop the war in Croatia' (2.1.3), it had made a similar crossover into non-music media – and without a commercial release. The quick development of the mythic matrix was evident in a set of Photoshopped images posted online soon after Gotovina's arrest. Some juxtaposed his portrait with Homeland War images, but over a third added it to posters from Hollywood war and fantasy films.¹⁶⁵ Although one cannot tell who originally created them, they still help to suggest one frame of reference within which Gotovina is perceived.¹⁶⁶

Gotovina's arrest resolved the last open issue of the Račan-era protests: in the meantime, Norac had been convicted and sentenced in Croatia and Janko Bobetko had died. Thereafter, war crimes indictments could remain a source of resentment but not a live problem, since new government policy would not immediately influence events (despite occasional appeals for Gotovina to be remanded to house arrest in Croatia). However, patriotic showbusiness's rationale did not disappear because the impetus for protests had lessened: the successful commercial formula continued to attract the recording industry and its media.

¹⁶² Including one in the name of 'Kristijan Horvat' (Christian Croat).

¹⁶³ According to a panicked *Feral* (Govedić 2006), many Zagreb schools reportedly played Narodni radio during breaks (possibly because that station offered the most music in pupils' first language), thus disseminating Thompson to impressionable minds.

¹⁶⁴ Mate Bulić's song *Narodno veselje* (*Popular merriment*), with humorous verses about Croatian regions, also alluded to the song in its couplet about Herzegovina (when, in the video set in a tavern, Herzegovinans moved their table up to the Croatian party).

¹⁶⁵ *We Were Soldiers*, *Escape From Victory*, *Saving Private Ryan*, *The Last Samurai*, *The Return of the King*, *Braveheart*, and *Troy* – and an *ET* poster re-subtitled 'Ante, come home'. Oddly, the manipulated *Return of the King* poster placed Carla del Ponte's head on the body of the heroic King Aragorn: Del Ponte, the Hague Tribunal prosecutor, was usually subjected to 'sexualised, misogynist' language in pro-Gotovina discourses instead (Schäuble, in press). <http://www.antiniplakati.host.sk> [accessed 4 January 2006].

¹⁶⁶ There are parallels between the hostility to 'Europe' here and in support of the Bosnian Serb general Ratko Mladić, another fugitive from The Hague (Obradović 2007). However, Michaela Schäuble (in press) argues that Gotovina and Norac presented a 'gentleman-hero' image which was rarely applied to Serbian war heroes.



Figure 1: Gotovina's image on Hollywood film posters (*We Were Soldiers*; *The Return of the King*; *ET*).

4.5 Marketing patriotic showbusiness

4.5.1 Narodni radio

In the mid-2000s the most important vehicle for patriotic music was Juraj Hrvačić's cross-media platform, particularly Narodni radio – where Thompson had held a 20% share since February 2006 (*Feral* 2006). Besides NR, the only national station with an entirely 'domestic' playlist, Hrvačić owned local/regional stations covering most of Croatia, a central local-radio news agency, the local Zagreb channel Z1 and (after 2003) his own record label, Hit Records. According to *Nacional* (2004a), *Arena* had also been contracted out to Hrvačić for five years in 2004. NR gave Thompson's new singles maximum rotation, advertised events such as his Oluja commemoration in Čavoglave and his album signing in Frankfurt (for the benefit of diaspora audiences listening on the internet), and organised a fundraising concert in January 2006 which assembled Thompson, Škoro and Mate Bulić with Baruni and Zečić to benefit a Croat church in Bosanska Posavina.¹⁶⁷

Nacional had argued in the 1990s that Hrvačić's media network (Narodni radio; local/regional stations covering most of Croatia; a central local-radio news agency; he later acquired Z1 and founded his own record label, Hit Records), financed by the businessman Miroslav Kutle, had been part of a plan by Pašalić for HDZ to maintain stealth control of the media in case it lost an election and would not be able to operate through the powerful

¹⁶⁷ *Slobodna Dalmacija* reported supportively: 'Marko Perković addressed the audience with a message not to fall for the provocation of equating patriotism with fascism, with which he deserved the excited audience's loud ovations' (Marušić 2006).

state broadcaster (Maksimović 1999). The political scientist Ante Čović termed this an attempt at establishing a 'para-state' (Malić 2000). However, it is impossible to tell what became of this system (if it even existed) after Kutle was imprisoned and Pašalić lost the HDZ leadership election to Sanader. There is no evidence that the Hrvačić network continued to operate for the political ends *Nacional* alleged, but his media did promote conservative ideological values into which Thompson's own ideology fitted well. Star images are always the product of a set of institutions rather than the individual star (Dyer 1998:152-3): the uncertainty here is whether those institutions included covert party-political actors rather than the usual music industry infrastructure.

The Hrvačić infrastructure was instrumental in promoting the most recent musicians discussed in this chapter, Dalibor Bartulović Shorty and Tomislav Bralić. Shorty came from Vinkovci in eastern Slavonia, and a song on his 2004 debut album described the effects of the Homeland War on his hometown. *Dodji u Vinkovce* (*Come to Vinkovce*) repackaged many motifs from 1990s music about the war in Slavonia (2.4.1), and sampled an identically-titled tamburica song from Brodifest 1995. Shorty's version was itself performed there in 2005 and was then taken up by NR, which rarely playlisted hip-hop. Thanks to NR, *DUV* crossed over into the repertoire of patriotic and 'birthplace' songs, and was often played on NR shows dedicated to them. Shorty's crossover as a performer followed.

4.5.2 Shorty and the limits of the 'alternative'

In 2005, *Globus* profile included Shorty among the 'new new wave' of alternative musicians in Croatia (Jindra 2005) – yet after *DUV* and a second album touching on patriotic themes, his membership of the alternative was called seriously into question. Ilko Čulić (2007a) called him 'the Škoro of rap' with regard to an anti-Hague song and questioned whether he should be thought of as a hip-hop performer at all, since his songs supporting indictees were not compatible with hip-hop's ethos. In 2007, when Shorty performed at Thompson's Oluja commemoration, his crossover seemed complete. Nonetheless, since rap discourse 'characteristically includes the practice of *representing* one's place' (Solomon 2005b:16, emphasis original), it was little wonder that Croatian hip-hop, with its local styles distinguished by regionalisms (Bosanac 2004:115), would come to deal with commonly articulated nationalist political standpoints.

DUV was consistent with existing conventions of home/homeland imagery and ideological wartime showbusiness. Its three rap verses depicted the narrator's pleasure in

his immediate home, related it to the region (Slavonia), and presented his Homeland War narrative. It claimed continuity with regional tamburica songs by drawing on the appropriate regional lexis (tamburaši, bećari, hrast, bećar, šor, sokak, njiva, sljiva, ravnica, vranči), and in locating the narrator's home as 'where that lamp burns' ('di gori ona lampa') evoked the tamburica standard *Gori lampa nasrid Vinkovaca* (*A lamp burns in the middle of Vinkovci*). The former and present texts confirmed each other's validity (see Žanić 2007:23), and supported the narrator's self-description as a young man aware and respectful of his ancestors' traditions.

The Homeland War verse continued the narrative of Slavonia as Croatia's beleaguered but heroically resistant front line, as in wartime/post-war depictions of Vukovar (2.4). Shorty's representation of the actual conflict was a stark aggressor/defender opposition:

Palili su naše šume, mi smo ih opet zasadili
Rušili su naše kuće, mi smo ih opet izgradili

Ubijali su moj narod al' smo ostali na svom
Da branimo svoj dom, jer volimo svoj dom i vjerni domu svom¹⁶⁸

Thus 'our' forests and houses had been destroyed by the impersonalised enemy but replanted and rebuilt by 'ourselves', confirming the group's rightful possession of the land – and the basic object of defence, as in wartime songs like *Čavoglave*, remained the home. Another intertextual reference quoted Miroslav Škoro's famous *Ravnica* and even implied that the tamburica itself was a weapon of resistance ('when the fingers touch the string, hands off my plains' – 'kad prsti taknu žicu, ne dirajte mi ravnicu') – another widely-used discourse in the wartime state media.¹⁶⁹

The first verse tied the narrator to his home through 'my ancestors' bones sleeping sweet sleep' ('kosti mojih predaka sanjaju slatkim snom'), repeating an often-nationalised grave-site discourse where territory is marked as 'ours' through the conjunction of 'our' sons and 'our' soil (Verdery 1999:98), and said that there candles were lit 'for the heroes who died for the colours, to the pride and honour of my Slavonia's name' ('za heroje što su ginule za boje/na ponos i čast imena Slavonije moje'). The rationale for defiance and sacrifice matched Croatia's official war aims of freedom and the desire to be 'masters on our own land' ('svoj na svome'). Gender portrayals were consistent with wartime and pre-

¹⁶⁸ 'They burned down our forests, we planted them again/they tore down our houses, we built them again/they killed my people but we stayed on our own [land]/to defend our home, because we love our home and are faithful to our home.'

¹⁶⁹ Mladi šest's *Nije na prodaju* (*It's not for sale*, 2007) also alluded to *Ravnica* and war memory while attacking 'former comrades' ('bivši drugovi') and ex-atheists who were selling off 'our' islands and waterways.

war imagery of male friends/soldiers as the sons of a maternal landscape which can reappear as a fairy, and male comradeship or 'male hedonism' (Senjković and Dukić 2005:50) cemented by drinking and righteous combat was more important than the company of women. The song's only non-mythical woman was the narrator's mother, praised for raising him as a good Slavonian male.

Shorty's second album *Moj jedini način* (*My only way*, 2007), particularly the track *Heroji danas* (*Heroes today*), built on *DUV*'s success. Shorty framed *Heroji* as 'a song for Blago [Zadro] and the Tanks' Graveyard [...] this is my way of remembering the fighters',¹⁷⁰ but dedicated most of it to condemning Croatian pandering to Europe 'just so foreigners don't call us Balkanites' ('samo da nas stranci ne nazivaju Balkanci'). As Thompson had done in one 2006 song (4.6.1), Shorty discussed his own controversial persona, situated himself as a patriot not a nationalist,¹⁷¹ and argued that his critics misunderstood him because they failed to grasp the authentic values he respected:

No ako niste, pogledajte križevi stoje
Nek im je zemlja laka, smrt nikom nije divna
A mnogima je moja *Dodji u Vinkovce* himna
Vama sam samo seljak, dičim se duše proste
Ja bar znam ko sam, a vi dal' znate ko ste?¹⁷²

Thompson's song did not identify the masters of the servile writers attacking him, but Shorty explicitly located the source in Europe. Dejan Jović (2006:90) argues that 'Europe' replaced Yugoslavia as a fundamental Other during late Tuđmanism when the EU began to demand co-operation with The Hague; thereafter the EU delayed Croatia's accession talks at British and Dutch request because of the Croatian government's alleged failure to share intelligence on Gotovina's whereabouts. Euroscepticism and support for Gotovina were often mutually reinforcing, as when Zadar teenagers burned an EU flag on learning of Gotovina's arrest: the group were also heard singing *Ante, Ante* and *Sude mi*, as well as *JGS* (Vučetić 2005).

By rejecting the 'peasant' label and mocking his critics' fear of the Balkans, Shorty directly confronted 'anti-nationalist' discursive practices which associated nationalism with a village mentality. For Shorty, their 'nationalism' was his legitimate respect for the war's

¹⁷⁰ '[P]jesma za Blagu i Tenskovsko groblje [...] ovo je moj način sjećanja na borce'. Zadro, a Croatian commander of the defence of Vukovar, died during the siege. At the Tanks' Graveyard, outside Vukovar, lightly-armed Croatian soldiers had destroyed Yugoslav tanks. The media called Croatian soldiers 'fighters' ('borci') early on, before 'branitelji' spread (it was also the usual Titoist term for Partisans).

¹⁷¹ 'Patriot sam, a idiot me zove nacionalistom' – 'I'm a patriot, but an idiot calls me a nationalist'.

¹⁷² 'But look [where] the crosses stand, if you haven't/let them rest easy, death is wonderful to nobody/but my *Dodji u Vinkovce* is an anthem to many/to you I'm just a peasant, I'm proud of [my] coarse soul/at least I know who I am, do you know who you are?'

memory, and he not they could claim fully realised selfhood. Like Thompson, he could derive moral authority from his war experience, albeit on different grounds: his opponents ‘have no idea, because they weren’t here’, while ‘I was in Vinkovci in 1991 and I know what I’m talking about’ (Mila 2007). The dominant narrative of the Homeland War could accommodate Thompson as a member of an identifiable group (branitelji). Shorty had been a child in 1991, and thus belonged to another social group equally as important in wartime ideology (ch. 2).

Heroji also alluded to *DUV*, now apparently essential to Shorty’s persona. Integrated into Hrvačić’s promotional system, it had received far more airplay than (e.g.) another rap song about post-conflict Slavonia by General Woo, a teenage refugee from Vukovar who had settled in Zagreb and become a leading MC. *Vrati se na Dunav* (*Come back to the Danube*) referred to the date of the fall of Vukovar, Vesna Bosanac (a doctor captured during the occupation) and ‘mothers still looking for their sons’ (‘majke još uvijek traže svoje sinove di su’), but not to ethnicity, heroism/sacrifice, religion or tradition. Its emphasis was on improving young people’s life amidst economic uncertainty, a genuine challenge which did not exist in Shorty’s *DUV* idyll. Shorty’s music instead articulated a coherent identity-narrative which unproblematically connected the individual to the perceivable region and the abstract nation through established textual conventions, and claimed the centre much as Škoro had done when he spoke of the ‘loud minority’ confronting the ‘silent majority’.

4.5.3 Tomislav Bralić

The patriotic hit of 2006 was Tomislav Bralić’s song *Croatijo, iz duše te ljubim* (*Croatia, I love you from the soul*), the centrepiece of an ensemble concert by several klapas at Poljud. The song described the narrator’s patriotic feelings through family relationships, and used the typical conventions of regional pop to situate itself within Dalmatia’s ‘place-myth’. Its lyrics, in Dalmatian ikavica, featured various images of coastal life and nature (stone, olives, brush, mandolins), and the klapa backed up Bralić’s vocals – a formula already established by Tomislav Ivčić and Mišo Kovač in the 1970s–1980s. Bralić described the narrator’s father inducting him into the nation:

Još se sjećam onih riči što mi uvek priča ćaća
[...] Svaku stope ove zemlje jubi kad odrasteš, voljeni moj sine¹⁷³

Only the title line about Croatia identified it as patriotic (national) rather than regional.

¹⁷³ ‘I still remember those words my dad always tells me [...] love every inch of this country when you grow up, my beloved son.’

Croatijo had gone more or less unnoticed when first performed in 1997 at Hrvatski pleter, but NR revived it in 2006 to promote the Poljud concert (5.1.2). During the Homeland War Bralić had spent two-and-a-half years in Zadar's 112 Brigade. He would therefore have been entitled to the same authenticity as Thompson in performing as a veteran, but did not engage with the veterans' movement in the same way. Zadar, the closest city to Ante Gotovina's birthplace Pakoštane, accorded the general particularly heroic status because shelling of the city had all but ceased after he was named commander for Dalmatia (Hudelist 2005c). However, by 2006 Gotovina campaigning had been folded into the generalised 'truth about the Homeland War' initiative and there was less institutional demand for songs directly commemorating the general. Bralić's biography might have made him a good choice for a Gotovina song if he had become famous earlier, but nobody's needs were served by one in 2006–07.

Bralić's song would not have become a hit without appealing to many listeners, but NR gave it the prominence necessary for it to reach them. His 2006 success enabled him to appear at two important events in 2007 based on patriotic popular music: the reception of the Croatian waterpolo team and Thompson's stadium concert. He also sang *Croatijo* at that year's HDZ congress and was joined on stage by Ivo Sanader (Rožman 2007b). Bralić might have deserved to be called 'the Thompson of the new government' just as much as Škoro. Both epitomised an ostensibly centrist patriotism which avoided politically divisive topics. Their rise offered a new political and commercial background to Thompson's first album since the *Index* scandal.

4.6 Centre or extreme: Marko Perković Thompson, 2006-07

4.6.1 *Bilo jednom u Hrvatskoj*, 2006

Thompson's 2006 album *Bilo jednom u Hrvatskoj* (*Once upon a time in Croatia*) prompted intensive promotional activity by Croatia Records, including a concert tour in 2007 which climaxed at the Maksimir stadium in Zagreb. Since 2002/*EMN*, the 2003 election victory of Sanader's reformed HDZ had calmed the anti-government invective directed against the 'Communist' Račan; Mesić's re-election campaign in 2005 had turned on socio-economic rather than national/patriotic themes (Fisher 2006:185); Gotovina had been arrested and delivered to The Hague; Thompson's most recent media attention had been negative (the *Index* scandal), while Škoro and Bralić had released successful patriotic songs avoiding Thompson's political divisiveness. Thompson's new material therefore differed from

EMN in several ways which aimed to increase his appeal and perhaps overcome some of EMN's more controversial aspects. His earlier folk elements were downplayed, and the Prljavo Kazalište guitarist Damir Lipovšek-Keks was hired as musical producer to strengthen his rock credentials. A coherent visual branding was commissioned, and the songs evoked medieval and prehistoric Croatia as often as they did contemporary politics.

The *BJUH* visuals continued the theme of medievalism and the mythic past. The cover featured a downward-pointing sword with two plecters on its hilt, a St Benedict medallion (as worn by Thompson) for its pommel, and a wooden rosary (as worn by many Homeland War soldiers) wrapped around it.¹⁷⁴

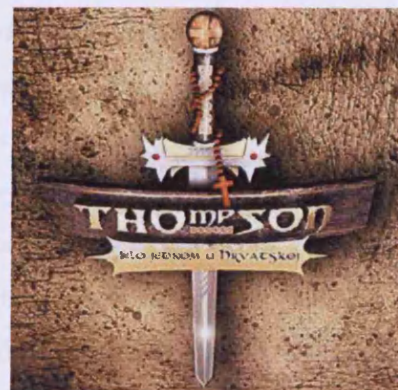


Figure 2: *Bilo jednom u Hrvatskoj* (2006)

A medieval-style typeface with exaggerated runic serifs was introduced for Thompson's name. Exaggerated heroic medievalism with its power connotations is often used in metal music (Walser 1993:152), but the designer Bino Uršić explicitly linked it to an attempt to repair Thompson's star image:

The perception of his figure in public was in principle reduced to an Ustaša. We agreed that we wanted to turn a nationalist into a patriot. [...] we decided to throw out all the elements connected to Ustašism and Nazism, and leave just a homeland [domovinski] overtone. But in history to go as far as the 7th century, and not to the Second World War. So we went into a timeless space and a boundary of worlds which actually reminds many people of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*. (Jindra 2007)

The repair job was also evident in CR's own publicity material, such as the sale of official Thompson T-shirts in olive-green as well as black. This matched the album cover, and any military associations were with regular forces not HOS paramilitaries or the NDH's Black Legion (Crna legija). The lead feature in CR's winter newsletter was an interview with Thompson which began by presenting him as a devoted family man (he was now the married father of three children), and then dealt with the controversies around his image. A question about the Netherlands incident 'when you were banned from performing' allowed him to explain it as one of several 'attacks on me' and recall how 'individuals in the media and other people, systematically and for some foreign interests smeared and insulted

¹⁷⁴ The plecter (a knotwork symbol which often decorates stone) has become a symbol of Croatian antiquity. Rosary-wearing soldiers in many wartime photographs became a symbol of the Croatian soldier's experience, with connotations of a battle for Christianity. See Senjković 2002:20–2, 229.

me and everyone else who was working for the genuine values of the Croatian people and state.’ The interview then returned to topics such as Thompson’s helping his home village and the meaning of his medallion, which commemorated the saint who had ‘first brought Christianity among us’ (Popović 2006).

Most of the *BJUH* songs emphasised distant history or Thompson’s feelings about his family (incorporating the changes in his personal life into his performance image). Even the songs about the memory of fallen Homeland War soldiers, *Dub ratnika* (*Warrior’s ghost*) and *Ratnici svjetla* (*Warriors of light*), phrased contemporary issues pseudo-medievally. However, he commented directly on his public reception on *Neka ni’ko ne dira u moj mali dio svemira* (*Don’t let anyone touch my little part of the universe*), which addressed the *Index* scandal. The album as a whole elaborated a continuous historical narrative framing Thompson as a righteous man who respected the core national values (God, family, homeland) and had been unfairly attacked by traitors to their own people.

After an introductory song *Početak* (*Beginning/Genesis*) where Thompson described the Fall of Man and pledged that he would not allow himself or his children to live sinfully, the album’s first single *Dolazak Hrvata* (*The coming of the Croats*) portrayed God granting the land of Croatia to the Croat people on their arrival in the 7th century and commanding them to love their land, build homes there and defend it with their blood (‘ljubi svoju zemlju, na njoj ti sagradi dom/i brani je krvlju svojoj’). Thompson expressed his devotion to his young sons on the album’s finale *Sine moj* (*Oh, my son*), and honoured his grandfather Šimun on *Moj dida i ja*, a nostalgic description of spending time with his grandfather and being taught the Christian values he had since passed down to his own son.¹⁷⁵

The protagonist of the historical song *Diva Grabovčeva* had apparently inspired Thompson so much that he had named his daughter after her (Popović 2006). She was a shepherdess in a historical novel by Ivan Aralica, whose novels about Ottoman-era Christian–Muslim relations also drew on epic traditions and were admired by Tuđman (Žanić 2007:298) – indeed Aralica himself said that negative reactions to his work tended to mention Škoro and Thompson using similar themes (Jurišić 2006). Thompson’s song described how she had been killed by an (unnamed) enemy while still ‘innocent/virgin’ (‘nevina’) and thus been received ‘into the Virgin’s embrace’ (‘u Gospin zagrljaj’). Her essence lived on in ‘a wonderful spark’ (‘jedan divan sjaj’) still visible ‘in our women’s eyes’

¹⁷⁵ Despite the ‘pure rock’ line in Thompson’s marketing, the video (filmed in Čavoglave) still used typical Thompson imagery of folk and rock (i.e. traditional and modern culture) merging. The video juxtaposed village folk-dancers outside Čavoglave’s church (paid for by Thompson) and Lipovšek in a long leather jacket playing a solo outside (posed like the guitar solo in Guns & Roses’ *November rain*).

(‘u oči našim ženama’). *Diva Grabovčeva* was unusual for Thompson in having a female subject, since his songs usually only featured women in the interconnected roles of fairies/nymphs (‘vile’) or the Madonna. However, the murdered shepherdess had limited autonomy compared to the men in homosocial relationships (grandfathers/fathers/sons and comrades-in-arms) who occupied most of the album.

The first, most mystical reference to contemporary politics occurred during *Duh ratnika*, a dialogue between Thompson and a Croatian soldier’s ghost who could not rest because he was still searching for his homeland. Thompson’s character told him that ‘you gave your blood for [the land’s] freedom, and the thousand-year dream became reality’ (‘za njenu slobodu krv si svoju dao/i tisućljetni san je stvarnost postao’),¹⁷⁶ but the ghost could not recognise ‘the values for which we died’ (‘vrednote za koje smo mrili’), and Thompson had to sadly tell him that ‘dark forces rose up against the crown and throne’ (‘podigle na nju sile tame, udarile na krunu i prijestolje’). Therewith the ghost commanded him to keep watch for traitors:

Uvijek je bilo i uvijek će biti onih što će dušu vragu prodati
A vi zato bdijte jer morate bditi, domovini ponos vratiti¹⁷⁷

The ‘dark forces’ hinted at HDZ’s loss of office in 2000, but also evoked the 1089 conspiracy against King Zvonimir. Zvonimir, the first King of Croatia recognised by the Pope, was supposed to have cursed his murderers (Croatian nobles) that Croatia would always be subject to foreign rule; ‘breaking Zvonimir’s curse’ was a common nationalist metaphor during the separation from Yugoslavia (Žanić 1995:111–9). Zvonimir recurred in another song on *BJUH*, *Kletva kralja Zvonimira* (*King Zvonimir’s curse*). Here the conspirators were portrayed as ‘Judas’ sons’ who had ‘sold our dreams’ (‘prodali su naše snove Judini sinovi’) so that ‘we’re begging for justice at foreign gates again’ (‘pred vratima tuđim opet za pravdu molimo’) while Zvonimir’s soldiers were ‘in a dungeon’ (‘u tamnici tvoji su vojnici’).

The least metaphorical treatment of politics was *Neka ni’ko ne dira...*, where Thompson dealt with people who had called him a ‘fascist’ even though ‘I never wanted anything of someone else’s, only the free country’ (‘nisam nikad htio tuđe ništa, samo nju, zemlju slobodnu’). Their ‘servile pens’ were attacking him ‘as if they [had] defended villages’, i.e. as if they had acquired the legitimacy to question his patriotism by proving themselves in

¹⁷⁶ The ‘thousand-year dream’ was common in pro-Tuđman rhetoric: supposedly Croats had dreamed of their own statehood ever since union with the Hungarian crown in 1102, and Tuđman had made it a reality (Žanić 1995:114–5).

¹⁷⁷ ‘There have always been and will be those who will sell their souls to the devil/so you keep watch because you must keep watch and bring pride back to the homeland.’

battle (as Thompson was well-known to have done). Thompson argued, as per media interviews, that his attackers were actually Communists who decried all patriotism as fascism:

Domoljublje prozvali fašizam
Tako brane njihov komunizam¹⁷⁸

Thompson's politics had not essentially differed from those he expressed on *EMN* in 2002 – importantly for a musician whose image depended on personal authenticity and believability; however, *BJUH* was less concerned with standing up to an unfriendly government, more with situating contemporary history in the context of the past. Interestingly, Gordana Uzelac's research into Croatians' opinions of national symbols found that 'consensus' was more likely to be reached around 'Croatian "earlier" history', whereas Second World War 'antagonisms' remained divisive (Uzelac 2006:307). The general tone of *BJUH* and its marketing intended to sell Thompson to the widest possible audience, using pseudo-medieval content to that end. The relationship of Thompson – and his audience – to NDH memory nonetheless remained tense when the repair of his star image was tested at the central concert of his promotional tour (7.2).

4.6.2 Patriotism, nationalism and gender

Thompson's increased prominence and associations with the populist right after 2002 reinforced music critics' reaction to his songs and also made his figure a symbol for the disintegration of post-war society in literature and film. A traumatised veteran in Dalibor Matanić's 2002 film *Fine mrtve djevojke* (*Fine dead girls*) wore army uniform every day and played *Čavoglave* at full blast through his apartment window. Several scenes in Vlado Bulić's novel *Putovanje u srce hrvatskoga sna* (*Journey to the heart of the Croatian dream*) juxtaposed Thompson and other patriotic music with scenes of violence, social alienation and destructively hegemonic masculinity.¹⁷⁹ Its title (alluding to the Croatian translation of Hunter S Thompson's *Fear and loathing in Las Vegas*) comes from a section where the protagonist Denis Lalić and a co-worker follow the lyrics of *Iza devet sela* in order to find Thompson's village (Bulić 2006:172). Bulić is concerned with the Dalmatian hinterland's

¹⁷⁸ 'They called patriotism fascism/thus they defend their Communism'.

¹⁷⁹ E.g. Lalić as a boy hears *Kreni Gardo* after an afternoon where his friends attacked an old man while he looked on and struggled to hold back tears because 'I wasn't allowed to cry. Men don't cry' (Bulić 2006:69–70). A teenage Lalić and his schoolfriend are threatened by a local bully but defended by Lalić's cousin who has earned their respect by joining HOS, defusing the confrontation by inviting them all inside to drink and sing *Evo zore* (Bulić 2006:139–40). An alcoholic war veteran requests Thompson's *Moj Ivane* in a bar and drinks a brandy for each of his nine comrades who died at Kupres, the song's location (Bulić 2006:164–5).

macho values, and – much like Thompson's own self-presentation – credits the protagonist's grandfather with the key role in socialising the boy into a value-system of historical memory and gender. Lalić's grandfather had been a Partisan (the adult Lalić shares his scepticism of Tuđman), taught him the meaning of hard manual work, and urged Lalić's paramilitary cousin to repress his traumas from the front (Bulić 2006:51–3, 63).

Friendship and male family ties play an important role in patriotic music such as Thompson's, where women only matter if they are mothers (socialising males), fairies (guiding males), the Virgin Mary (both roles combined), or an exemplary figure like the Diva Grabovčeva. Thompson no longer sings his mid-1990s romantic songs about direct male–female relationships at concerts, except *Lipa Kaja* (*Pretty Kaja*) from *BJUH*, which begs a young woman of his 'clan' not to marry another ('Lipa Kajo roda moga, ne udaj se za drugoga') – or possibly an Other, who has concealed his true nature from her family ('da su tvoji prije znali kome su te obećali'). In Albanian men's heroic/historical songs, women exist solely through their relationships to men, constructing history as entirely a male domain (Sugarman 1997:255–6), and the very point of 19th-century British adventure narratives was that the domestic and feminine did not exist there (Dawson 1994:75). Thompson's writing-out of women thus resembles both Balkan and western imaginations of masculine heroic space. Was this because epic warriors had the role of 'sacrificial victim' and therefore needed to be pure, as Ivan Čolović (2002:52) suggested? Thompson's musical precedents offer more prosaic explanations: the regional songs which preceded patriotic popular music tended to depict male companionship (often celebrated in taverns) where the only significant woman was the narrator's mother (Baker, forthcoming (b)), and the visual presentation of metal music frequently wrote out women whether the male-only space was a concert performance or a medieval fantasy (Walser 1993:115).

Reana Senjković's comparison (2002:189) of post-war Croatian society with US society after Vietnam offers a political perspective on patriotic showbusiness's representations of masculinity. Senjković refers to Susan Jeffords' argument that post-Vietnam US filmmaking depicted combatants' 'masculine bond' as a blueprint for restructuring relations between men in society itself (Jeffords 1989:xiii). Vietnam narratives connected disparate incidents into a 'collective experience' through the common bond of masculinity and combat, to the exclusion of non-participants (Jeffords 1989:25), and the loss of the war was blamed on 'the feminine' – including the US government (1989:144). The biggest flaw in the comparison might be that Croatia did not lose the Homeland War as the USA had lost in Vietnam. However, the integralist standpoint claimed that failure to incorporate

Herzegovina into the Croatian state was itself a loss, the war had not had a tidy conclusion (eastern Slavonia had remained under UN administration until 1998), and the war crimes indictments against Croatian officers – a sign that Croatia's hard-won 'independence' was not absolute – provided further cause for resentment against the government (c.f. *Prijatelji* and *Heroji danas*). Despite the 'rhetorical glorification' of militarised masculinity during and after the war, the incongruity between this prevailing discourse and many veterans' low socio-economic status was a precondition for ideas about a 'reaffirmation of manhood' discourse (Schäuble, in press). Veterans might have had reason to wish for a re-masculinisation of society in Croatia after all.

4.6.3 Making meaning from musical texts

Patriotic popular music, or rather Thompson, was one of the two issues on which most people I met in Croatia had strong opinions – the other being showbusiness-folk music (ch.5). My informants were disproportionately likely to have gone through (or be in) university education and speak a foreign language,¹⁸⁰ so their views could not be viewed as expressions of general public opinion. None stated that they 'listened' to Thompson in the sense of 'listening to' music as a repetitive, performative cultural choice (see Perasović 2001:191). They discussed moments in Thompson's career (particularly Poljud and the Netherlands incident) more than they did his songs, so probably gained their information from the news media and/or word of mouth. Thompson was so popular, according to my informants, because of the effects of the war (long-term sensitivities; an audience who would be responsive to hatred against Serbs; 'veterans' as a potential target market), the characteristics of his region, or family upbringing according to similar values. Interestingly, Thompson had not figured at all in the 'anti-nationalist' discourses collected by Stef Jansen (2005a) in 1996–98. During my own fieldwork, Thompson was the key symbol for discussing such issues.

Informants who disapproved of Thompson usually implied some difference in background between themselves and people who did appreciate his music. Kristina, for instance, had watched HTV's broadcast of Thompson's 2007 concert with a friend from Karlovac. Her friend had commented afterwards that she could now see Thompson was a 'normal person', yet Kristina had been thinking quite the opposite. She put the difference of opinion down to the serious effects of the war in Karlovac. Barbara, a retired woman from central Croatia, implied that she and Thompson belonged to different groups when

¹⁸⁰ I still conducted all interviews in Croatian, except one in English at the request of an informant who was studying it.

she said that 'he says it's patriotic, but we call it nationalistic'.¹⁸¹ She thought young people listened to Thompson because they were offered nothing better, and because 'they come to Zagreb for university from all corners of Croatia, from *Herzegovina*' (her emphasis). Marijana, a sociology student from a dormitory town near Zagreb, also characterised Thompson as a 'heavy nationalist'. Goran, who worked for a local radio station in Slavonia, described Thompson as 'primitives' music', and complained that the town's mayor liked both Thompson and Shorty. Antun, from the same town, explained that responses to Thompson varied across Croatia. Thompson might be controversial in Zagreb where I had been living, but not in places which had 'suffered more in the war', and many of the people in his town originally came from the same region as Thompson. He added that the Second World War division into left and right was still not over and that people usually took the same positions their grandfather had held – unless they had an 'authoritarian' grandfather they wanted to rebel against.

The 2006–07 campaign to reposition Thompson seemed to not have changed sceptical informants' opinions about him. Occasionally the new musical policy had made an impression: Krešo, a young amateur musician, did say that Thompson's music without lyrics sounded like Iron Maiden, and Maja, who listened to metal, mentioned a metal club where '10–15' Thompson songs a night might be played on the jukebox. Maja had previously said she enjoyed a Finnish metal genre called 'folk metal', so I asked how this differed from Thompson's music (which he had sometimes called 'ethno-rock'). Maja's answer indicated that Thompson was classified politically, not musically: when Thompson holds concerts, there are Ustaša insignia and people raise their right hands, but that would not happen at a folk metal concert. Even if Thompson sounded like metal, he could not belong to 'metal' as Maja understood it, because his political orientation was incompatible with 'metal' as a symbolic construct (c.f. Shorty's exclusion from hip-hop).

Informants interpreted Thompson's messages differently. Antonija, a student, thought they were about Croatia's/'our' right to self-defence, national pride and the beauty of Croatia. She attributed the anti-Thompson reaction to Croatia approaching the EU so that 'it doesn't suit us any longer for people to be reminded of [the war] all the time'. Marijana mentioned 'our heroes' services,' Zagora and natural beauty. Another student, Amanda, immediately described Thompson's songs as proclaiming 'hatred against Serbs', going on to say that the graffiti at her local station which read 'Srbe na vrbe' ('[put] the Serbs on

¹⁸¹ However, Barbara's 'we' was fluid: later on she mentioned 'our diaspora' and 'our singer', i.e. the Croatian diaspora and a Croatian singer.

branches' i.e. 'lynch the Serbs') made her want to faint. She offered Prljavo Kazalište as an example of 'pure love for the homeland' instead. Željko, a financial journalist, told me that Thompson's songs were full of mountains and wolves, and explained that 'that's your difference between Split and Knin': people in Knin would listen to Thompson, 'he's great for those people, in Dalmatinska zagora,' while in Split they would listen to Mišo Kovač or Oliver Dragojević.

Željko's comments on Kovač and Thompson demonstrate how 'place-myths' structure judgements about a region and its culture. When I demurred that sometimes Thompson and Kovač seemed to be singing about the same topics, Željko replied 'but Kovač would sing about olives, the sea...' – i.e. the regional imagery which would code a song as 'Dalmatian'.¹⁸² While I was categorising the singers by theme, Željko was using place-images and place-myths. In the place-myth about Zagora, wolves live on mountains and people listen to Thompson and share his values (often exporting them to Zagreb). These myths, as Rob Shields has argued (1991:7), structure the practice of everyday life. In this case they are the origin of the 'hordes from the mountains' image which city-dwellers can apply to peripheral regions and their inhabitants who move to the city (Jansen 2005a:119). Patriotic and regional singers play on their region's place-myths and provide material for individuals to confirm or undermine the region's stereotypes. At the same time, the targets of these myths and stereotypes can 're-signif[y]' them by turning them into positive characteristics, as Michaela Schäuble (2006:2) observed in Sinj. The discourse of *Heroji danas* showed this re-evaluation in practice.

Conclusion

Popular music after the 'second transition' continued to be a site for promoting narratives of national identity, as in the 1990s and indeed previously. The prevailing narrative in this wave was based on Croatia's Homeland War experience, claimed automatic innocence for everything done while fighting the defensive war, denied foreigners any legitimacy to judge Croatia and called for the union of Croatia and Herzegovina. As such it had much in common with Tuđman's ideology, although some singers' attitude to the NDH more closely resembled the programme of the wartime HSP. The difference between the 1990s and 2000s was patriotic music's structural position within Croatian public space. The state

¹⁸² Kovač can fall on either side of the urban/semi-rural boundary. A passage in Jurica Pavičić's *Ovce od gipsa* contrasts young Croatian soldiers who listened to rock and knew each other from football matches with older men who were usually not born in Split, went home to the village at weekends, listened to Kovač and wore his moustache (Pavičić 2002:77).

did not systematically stimulate patriotic production as it had done in the 1990s, and its main means of doing so, HTV, became more independent from state control after Račan's media reforms.

In place of the state, powerful private interests became a new stimulus for patriotic music and promoted music which often opposed current state policies, especially relating to the Hague Tribunal. There is not enough evidence to assess arguments that those interests were supposed to give HDZ a basis to 'continue Tuđmanism by other means' in case it lost an election, or to support Pašalić in an orchestrated attempt to overthrow Mesić and Račan. However, politicians used patriotic music to send messages about their own values (e.g. when Pašalić or Ljubo Jurčić attended Thompson concerts, or Sanader joined Bralić on stage). Moreover, the songs which benefited most from media promotion were those which suited organised right-wing pressure groups. This was visible on a national level and even at the grassroots: when Željko Striza from Kaštel HVIDRA tried to stop a performance by the Bosniak folk singer Halid Bešlić at a local bar in 2006, he held a counter-event outside with Thompson, Škoro and Bete on the loudspeakers and free beer for all (Profaca 2006).

Patriotic showbusiness was certainly in large part an attempt to exert symbolic power; however, the reception of its messages was an uncertain and untidy process. Musical texts are inflected by a range of non-musical information about the performer (the 'star text'), and by many pre-existing conceptual frameworks which structure the meaning an individual can make from them. Patriotic music probably did not recruit many new 'patriots', but may have provided existing sympathisers with means of communication which would be easily intelligible because of the texts' wide dissemination: e.g. the veterans who marched at the state celebration of Homeland Thanksgiving Day in 2007 under the slogan 'Da se ne zaboravi – neka vide da nas ima' ('Lest it be forgotten – let them see that we're here'), incorporating a line from Thompson's *Lijepa li si*.

Popular music was also one of the most visible forms of commemorating the Homeland War and its dead. Even if Second World War dead were more frequently politicised than their 1990s counterparts (Bougarel 2007:167), music by Thompson, Škoro and Shorty injected Homeland War 'memory work' with political overtones into everyday life, not least when its radio airplay accompanied background activities from driving a car to supermarket shopping. The state's commemorative narratives, in contrast, could rarely penetrate private and domestic life so effectively – an advantage of 'unflagged' rather than 'flagged' commemoration (see Billig 1995). Meyers and Zandberg (2002:404) suggest that popular

cultural production's tendencies towards 'standardization', 'commercialization' and 'inoffensive flow' conflicted with the conventions of representing Israel's national tragedy, the Holocaust, through popular music. Yet, in contrast to Israel, new music about the Homeland War fitted unproblematically into general showbusiness, and was only likely to be marginalised if it explicitly praised the NDH. Perhaps this can be put down to how far patriotic showbusiness was integrated into regular showbusiness programming and marketing in the early 1990s, itself an echo of the co-option of showbusiness by the Yugoslav regime.

Dejan Jović (2004:98) suggests that transitions away from authoritarian regimes always involve the new regime trying to establish control over 'official memories', whereas 'consolidated liberal democracies' even extend pluralism to symbolic power. This conclusion would surprise cultural theorists like Michael Billig (1995) or Philip Schlesinger (1991), who contend that even in liberal democracies states enjoy privileged positions for exerting symbolic power and frequently make use of it. Nonetheless, the biggest efforts at memorialising recent history after 2000 were made by non-state groups and actors on the right. Their representations were structured to a large extent by the 1990s dominant presidential narrative, and constituted a symbolic basis for a community which was ethnically defined in theory but politically defined in practice. Other communities within Croatia found a symbolic basis in rejecting precisely those narratives.

Patriotic popular music was also a site where narratives of identity were contested. However, the musical contestation did not involve *national* identity so much as the urban, regional and cultural identities which interacted with it. There was not, for instance, a concerted attempt to musically celebrate Croatia's anti-fascist tradition as a response to the perceived celebration of the NDH, although Partisan imagery sometimes accompanied music-making in Labin and Rijeka. Neither was there an attempt to revive the wartime rocker-solder myth (3.3.2). Indeed, the very musicians who had contributed to it refrained from performing their wartime hits afterwards: e.g. Jura Stublić, for instance, did not make *E, moj druže beogradski* (2.2.1) part of his post-war performance persona, even though it had been just as popular as *Čavoglave*. The Thompson–Škoro model of commemorating the Homeland War was therefore allowed to dominate the commemorative field. Instead, the identity contests waged through musical production drew on and restated the symbolic constructions of community which underpinned ideas of urbanity and place-myths.

5 The cultural politics of music after 2000

Political change in Croatia affected the conditions for nationally-themed pop production but also changed the background of professional cultural politics in general – and Serbian political change too restructured ex-Yugoslav musical contacts (6.1.4). 1990s discursive practices were dominated by a presidential discourse promoting ethno-national belonging above anything else. This narrative affected musicians', executives' and journalists' activities and required constant investment in defining, contesting and justifying national cultural boundaries. With the election of a centre-left government in 2000 and its replacement in 2003 by a more centrist HDZ, the pressures to operate within this discourse were arguably lessened. Its traces were nonetheless visible at particular moments, showing that the discourse remained intelligible and available for use. The round millennial number should therefore not lead us to view 2000 as the only point of change.

Perhaps the most important post-2000 discourse was the narrative excluding pop-folk from full national cultural belonging. In comparison, contests over intra-national developments which did not similarly threaten external cultural boundaries (e.g. the 1990s' attempts to define a national popular music) were not so ferocious. The otherness of folk is even more flexible than Jansen's 'anti-nationalism' (2005a) would suggest: folk can be excluded for anti-nationalist *and* nationalist reasons using the same east/west urban/rural opposition, and can even connect political opponents in a shared dislike of folk. Pop-folk's polysemy as a boundary-symbol made it the most contentious aspect of post-2000 musical politics after 2000. As Croatian–Serbian cultural contacts increased (6.1), the evolution of a Croatian pop-folk crossover from its 1980s–1990s origins (3.3.1) appeared to be the most controversial musical issue.

The folk debates let one examine the reproduction of ethnicity in a period (post-2000) where ethnicity has not been thought of as an immediate political resource. With Croatia's war for independence won, state borders settled and territorial sovereignty confirmed, at first sight ethnicity might appear only to emerge at ritual moments (war commemorations; national sporting successes) or points of ethnically-marked tension (e.g. Croat–Serb intolerance in ex-front-line towns). However, Michael Billig (1995) reminds us that ethno-national communities/boundaries are reproduced daily in many subtle contexts. Croatian controversies over pop-folk show banal nationalism at work. However, they also illustrate the difficulties of imposing ethno-nationally based boundaries on a cultural area where the

same musical (etc.) symbols can be justifiably ascribed to several ethnic groups. Popular music can therefore illustrate constructivist approaches to nationalism (e.g. Brubaker 1996, Bhabha 2004).

Researching the cultural politics of Croatian music in 2006–07 ended up largely as researching the cultural politics of folk. Moving beyond a focus on ethnicity and nationalism, this material can also help reflect on current problems in popular music studies, where the core debate over concepts such as ‘scenes’ and ‘subcultures’ still relies on British/North American contexts. Croatia is socially and politically distinct, but Anglo-American cultural products (and Anglo-American sociologists...) are nonetheless well-known and influential. Relating PMS’s contemporary concerns to Croatia thus lets us ask whether the discipline’s concepts are less (or more) useful when extended beyond their original context.

5.1 Political change and the music infrastructure

5.1.1 Media fragmentation

The fragmentation of the music industry’s most important components (the recording industry and the television marketplace) after 2000 led to the rise of independent labels and the decline of domestic music programming on HTV. HTV’s policy-change can be attributed to Račan’s broadcasting reforms, the retirement of Ksenija Urličić (who dominated the 1990s entertainment department), and perhaps the new management’s desire to avoid the scandals which had tainted Urličić’s editorial policy. New entertainment editors were less interested in music – under Marija Nemčić domestic pop was temporarily not broadcast at all (Hudelst 2005b) – and minimised festival broadcasts (Cigoj 2002), incurring regular anger from the Croatian Musicians’ Union (HGU). Although two other national channels (Nova TV and RTL) launched, neither adopted an Urličić-like focus on music/variety but bought in transnational reality formats instead. Only a few Urličić-era programmes had Nova equivalents (*Jel’ me netko tražio?* reappeared as *Nad lipom 35* with the same setting/scriptwriter); RTL had even less interest in domestically-oriented programming and acquired most shows from German RTL.

Conversely, the emergence of powerful independent record labels (Aquarius, Dallas, Dancing Bear, Menart) had less to do with politics than with Croatia Records losing license arrangements with most global majors during its chaotic mid-1990s. The independents invested their profits from license releases in domestic rosters and became able to offer

established CR performers better conditions (the balance tipped in 2004 when Dallas signed Severina). A fifth challenger, Juraj Hrvaić's Hit Records, launched in 2003, the nearest equivalent to the 1990s HTV/CR complex. Hrvaić's Narodni radio, the only national station with a fully 'domestic' playlist, attracted opprobrium from professionals with a cultural/political interest in widening musical choices. Silvije Vrbanac, Radio 101's co-founder, described 101 as 'contributing to Croatia's urbanisation' and providing a different view of politics, but was resigned to it not attracting 'people who listen to Narodni radio' (Bajruši 2003).

Musicians, particularly those who benefited in the 1990s, often complained about the difficulty of getting playlisted by (and royalties from) HTV. In 2006 fifty Split musicians petitioned against the media's 'systematic destruction of Croatian music', which they blamed on particular individuals (*Jutarnji list* 2006b). The Hrvatski radio DJ Zlatko Turkalj (whose show consistently supported domestic pop) launched a 'Listen Croatian' campaign in 2007 (playing on the chamber-of-commerce slogan 'Buy Croatian'), inviting several famous musicians onto a song appealing to listeners to 'remember who you are and be proud of yourself' ('upamti tko si ti i se ponosi') because 'everything foreign's fair enough, but we've got our own [thing]' ('svaka čast svemu stranu al' mi imamo svoje').¹⁸³

Tonči Huljić, whom Urličić had reportedly favoured, frequently attacked HTV's new music policy, arguing that it jeopardised Croatia's cultural identity and would eventually risk its statehood. He attacked the 'provincialism' with which media insiders favoured 'urban music' and wrote off his own listeners as 'peasants' (Hudelst 2001b), blaming it on a 'central-European mentality' which had destroyed 'mass culture' and increased under Račan/Mesić (Jindra 2003). In 2001 Huljić joined other composers in buying out CR, but later quarrelled with them over an alleged plan to sell his shares to the Serbian entrepreneur Željko Mitrović (6.1.4). Thereafter Huljić gradually dedicated himself to television drama, while composers partially achieved their airplay demands by launching the satellite/cable Croatian Music Channel in 2005.

At least by 2007, when I often watched it, CMC's 'domesticity' related to record labels' origins rather than the music's cultural identity (although labels served as indirect gatekeepers). Croatian singles by Toše Proeski (a Macedonian) were highly rotated, and Zdravko Čolić too was promoted when CR co-released his 2007 album. Multi-channel broadcasting did increase airplay possibilities (e.g. HTV often showed concerts on its subscription cable channel), but also made state sovereignty over broadcasting more likely

¹⁸³ A presumably-ironic cover of 2006's winning Eurovision entry.

to be weakened by transnational media – particularly other ex-Yugoslav stations like Mitrović's TV Pink.¹⁸⁴ MTV's ex-Yugoslav strand 'MTV Adria' also launched in 2005 to promote 'urban culture' and resist 'turbofolk' (Baker 2006b:278), but its ratings remained low and some executives found it unhelpful because it did not have a Croatian office or organise events there.

Transnational television is commonly thought (and often feared) to undermine national cultural boundaries (Appadurai 1996). The pop manager Zoran Škugor argued that HTV scheduling policy exacerbated this because viewers could watch prime-time music on Bosnian/Serbian stations – becoming exposed to pop-folk, which increased the Croatian demand for it (Rožman 2006b). Adriatic Kabel's basic package in 2007 included the Serbian BK channel, owned by the Karić brothers, which frequently showed pop-folk (the premium package included Pink and the Serbian broadcaster RTS). All these channels made extra revenue from in-vision SMSs from viewers in ex-Yugoslavia and western Europe. BK tagged them with flags showing senders' locations: as my friend Mario pointed out when we watched BK together, Croatian senders seemed the most frequent – and they usually messaged in *ijekavica*.

5.1.2 Klapas

Developing a basis for Croatian popular music was not such a priority after 2000 – perhaps because the Huljić/Rus/Novković folk-pop crossover had already found one, perhaps because there was less ideological need. The tamburica experiment metamorphosed into Baruni's and Miroslav Škoro's ongoing commercial success rather than spawning another pop-tamburica wave, and reality talent-shows superseded dance in producing instant 'stars'. The two most striking developments were the increased visibility of Dinaric music as a by-product of Thompson's success and the mid-2000s popularisation of Dalmatian a-cappella *klapa* singing. The *klapa* wave resembled the tamburica project in pitting traditionalists against showbusiness entrepreneurs, but did not respond to an overarching state ideology like tamburica had seemed to. At its height it was nonetheless politically manipulated, as when Ivo Sanader's reformed HDZ hired Tomislav Bralić to perform at its 2007 congress (Derk 2007).

The traditional *klapa* presentation site, the Omiš festival, maintained tight presentation conventions and treated *klapas* as folklore. *Klapas*' showbusiness potential was indicated after *Klapa Cambi* covered several Gibonni songs, inspiring several pop performers to

¹⁸⁴ Since 2004 there have been persistent rumours that Mitrović will accumulate local Croatian channels and assemble a Pink network as he did in Bosnia.

appear at Dalmatian festivals backed by klapas (Gall 2000). The ethno-musician Mojmir Novaković had already predicted klapas could become commercialised and ‘married’ to showbusiness’ like tamburica had (Gall 1999a), and in 2004 *Feral* warned klapas would end up giving ‘you’ as much of a headache as tamburica because they were being cheapened into populist entertainment, distorting their normative amateur character: Hajduk Split were taking them to away matches, and at pop festivals they resembled ‘a cross between a Dražen Žanko concert and the Sinj Alka’ (negative boundary-symbols for *Feral*). All that remained was for ‘the lead tenor to grab the microphone, turn it towards the audience and shout “Your turn”’ (*Feral* 2004) – something alien to klapa performance conventions. Bralić in fact did exactly this at a Zagreb concert in 2007 (7.1), except that he told the crowd to raise their flags and scarves.

The klapa wave peaked in 2006–07 when Bralić’s *Croatijo, iz duše te ljubim* was revived to promote an ensemble klapa concert at Poljud: the co-sponsor Narodni radio gave it (and another revived song by Klapa Maslina) maximum rotation. Stadium concerts themselves contravened klapa tradition according to one Split student (who said klapas were meant to be serenading a woman, singing by the sea, or accompanying friends gathering for dinner in a small room – he likened klapas in stadiums to the Stones playing in a small chapel). When the event was reprised in Zagreb (February 2007) at the Cibona stadium, Bralić singing *Croatijo* immediately preceded the finale: he established much more direct communication with the audience than klapas conventionally did, and asked concert-goers to turn on their lighters and mobiles (as at pop/rock concerts). The finale involved every klapa coming on stage to sing in honour of the late basketball player Dražen Petrović (a Cibona player from Šibenik). Everyone including the audience accompanied Klapa Maslina on their revived hit, before folk-costumed dancers performed Gotovac’s *Erø* aria. Musicologically, *Erø* and klapa music fell on opposite sides of the Adriatic–Dinaric/coastal–highland boundary, but the audience responded enthusiastically – although falling noticeably quieter on lines which had not appeared on *Geni kameni*. The framing of the Poljud/Cibona concert (its choreographed finale; its scenery indicating the coast; its recorded speech about tradition from Ljubo Stipišić-Delmata) was still an unusual klapa presentation: another klapa concert (with different organisers) at the leading art-music venue, the Lisinski hall, did not contain any such additions. The host talked mainly about the participating klapas’ awards (never mentioned at Cibona), and when two acts who had had big radio hits (Đani Stipaničev and Klapa Maslina) tried to communicate with the

audience the response was lacklustre. Their attempts nonetheless indicated the transformation of klapa performance into showbusiness.

The cultural politics surrounding klapa music revived the tamburica question of whether traditional music could acceptably converge with showbusiness. Another potential goal – establishing klapa internationally as a national product à la Portuguese fado (like the 1990s tamburica/bouzouki comparison) – did not materialise, and klapa has not yet emulated the commercial success of Corsican polyphonic choirs, which similarly originated from local residents singing at social functions (see Bithell 2007). However, the struggles over klapa were not as bitter as those over tamburica (there was no public equivalent of the *Leina* case), klapa was not proposed as a pan-Croatian tradition and no national identity-narrative was developed around klapa to the same extent as tamburica, although Sanader's appropriation of klapa did signal a subtle difference from 1990s HDZ – and perhaps also reflected Sanader coming from Split whereas Tuđman came from the interior. Less appeared to be at stake in cultural politics after 2000, perhaps because cultural production was no longer so directly structured by a political narrative. However, showbusiness-folk remained contentious, perhaps a legacy of the 1990s' struggles.

5.2 Cultural boundaries and folk

5.2.1 The growth of pop-folk

The most contentious issues of musical politics in Croatia after 2000 concerned pop-folk (variously called 'folk', 'narodnjaci', 'turbofolk/turbo folk' or 'cajke'): what it was, where it came from, what influence it had on musical production in Croatia, and whether it was acceptable in Croatian musical culture. Contemporary equivalents of Yugoslav NCFM transgressed the boundary of national cultural identity according to the pervasive narrative that Croatia was culturally separate from Bosnia/Serbia; they also injected urban environments with a threatening dose of unresolved rurality, and provided symbolism for talking about broader post-transitional developments (Jansen 2005a). The 1990s efforts to separate Croatian music from ex-Yugoslav NCFM and promote various musical forms in its stead echoed in music criticism after 2000. Critics who had blamed the 1990s folk-pop crossover on Huljić and his clients extended their argument to other up-and-coming performers like Severina, Thompson or the dance group Colonia. New musical developments were incorporated into existing critical discourse, maintaining the anti-populist, anti-eastern and anti-village axes of criticism.

Pop-folk in Croatia should not be isolated from similar developments in Serbia (see Gordy 1999; Kronja 2001; Đurković 2002; Grujić 2006) or elsewhere in south-east Europe (see Buchanan ed. 2007): Serbian pop-folk in particular competes with Croatian pop for market-share throughout most of ex-Yugoslavia. The 1990s Serbian crossover of NCFM with rap/dance, often termed ‘turbo-folk’,¹⁸⁵ is often analysed as symptomatic of Milošević’s regime (not least after one singer married a paramilitary in 1995). Serbian professionals usually avoid the term for more recent music (Dugandžija 2005; Grujić 2006), although Croatian usage is less strict. The term seems to have been introduced to Croatia in a 1994 *Globus* report on Belgrade’s music scene under sanctions, emphasising the conspicuous consumption and macho gangsterism surrounding it (Garmaz 1994b). Music critics such as Ilko Čulić used ‘turbofolk’ for Serbian pop-folk music by 1995–96 and it gradually extended into an adjective for performers, songs or venues. The Croatian media very rarely defined ‘turbofolk’, instead letting readers assume its meaning.

‘Turbo folk’ in Serbia is frequently an exclusionary boundary-marking symbol in the prevalent pro-urban/anti-rural value-system: the music is supposedly mass-produced, low-quality and representative of a village mentality which has polluted cities/society (Grujić 2006), with a restrictively-gendered aesthetic of physically and economically powerful men and sexually powerful women (Greenberg 2006a:136). These meanings are familiar in Croatia (e.g. through the work of Serbian cultural commentators like Petar Luković and Ivan Čolović), although there ‘turbofolk’ also conveys further otherness through its foreign/Serbian origin. An idea drawn from Serbian cultural criticism (itself based on urbanist discourses pre-dating the fall of Yugoslavia) is therefore recontextualised to symbolically mark the boundaries of national musical identity. Agreeing what belongs inside may be hard; far easier to agree ‘turbofolk’ belongs outside (see Baker 2007).

The Croatian/Serbian opposition nests within a hierarchy of ‘symbolic geography’ where more easterly countries are constructed as foreign/Balkan through language and metaphors relating to the east (Bakić-Hayden and Hayden 1992:10). 1990s state policy drew on this to emphasise Croatia’s difference from Serbia, although Tuđman’s opponents also used it to depict him as Balkan and undesirable (Razsa and Lindstrom 2004). Music criticism often draws on such imagery to discuss folk’s influence on Croatian popular music (Baker 2007:144). For instance, one critic’s metaphor for the introduction of eastern (Bosnian/Serbian) elements into Dalmatian festival pop was that composers had ‘cooked

¹⁸⁵ Two words in Serbia, but often one in Croatia: I use one except when quoting or specifically discussing Serbia.

baklava in olive oil' (Čulić 2002a) – a comic juxtaposition of typical Balkan and Mediterranean cooking.

As in the 1990s, performers are often asked to explain their relationship to folk and easternness in promotional interviews. The 1990s' discursive practices, which related to particular political ends, appear to have outlasted their political moment and become taken for granted as a characteristic of national musical production. In 2000, for instance, Severina was asked to justify a new song's 'eastern feel' (Ferina 2000). Her then composer, Đorđe Novković, rejected any associations 'with the East' for her 2002 single *Mala je dala* (the subject of a scandal at the Porin awards when Severina added an extra line about her ex-manager Zrinko Tutić) (Dugundžija 2002). Mate Bulić, a Herzegovinan who could be classified as singing 'newly-composed folk songs' (Senjković and Dukić 2005:50), explicitly called himself 'a barrier against the east' who, like Thompson, performed 'Croatian folk [narodnu] music with ethno-elements' (Jadrijević-Tomas 2004).

Folk becomes newsworthy in Croatia almost annually, often when a particular event brings it further into national cultural space: Miroslav Ilić's tour (2002), Croatia's Eurovision vote for Željko Joksimović (2004), Ceca Ražnatović's televised interview (2005), Severina's selection for Eurovision (2006), or the Velesajam folk concert (2007). News features on folk nightclubs expand folk's image as dangerous, hedonistic and sexualised (5.3.3). After several shootings at folk nightclubs in January 2006, a frame for reporting further violence emerged which took it as self-evident that fighting would break out at folk venues. The incidents associated with folk over the next few months ranged from off-duty policemen vandalising a Lučko nightclub to a drunk throwing an olive at a judge's wife in Županja (*Novi list* 2006; Živković 2006). Local authorities responded to the mediated concern by investigating nightclubs' safety arrangements (e.g. in Karlovac) and restricting their opening hours (in Zagreb).

Two particular folk performers, Lepa Brena and Ceca Ražnatović, are often used as symbolic figures for the music/worldview as a whole (Baker 2006b:287). Brena had already personified 1980s pop-folk (and Yugoslav socialism), and remained meaningful to people who remembered her the first time.¹⁸⁶ Ceca's career had only just begun when Yugoslavia disintegrated, and in Croatia she is far less well-known for her music than for marrying Arkan, which associated her with extremist Serbian nationalism (she continues to celebrate Arkan's memory for a Serbian audience). The political, ethnic and cultural

¹⁸⁶ Zlatko Gall (1992) has often joked that Croatian showbusiness has striven to produce a 'Lijepa Brijena' – Lepa Brena in (Croatian) ijekavica.

combination makes Ceca a multi-dimensional exclusionary symbol. To compare Doris Dragović's new 1999–2000 musical style to Ceca conveyed its deviation from typical Croatian production much more effectively than comparing it to another folk star such as Mira Škorić – which might also have good ethnomusicological grounds (Rasmussen 2007:85). Ražnatović is also excluded from Croatia individually: she has never performed there, and Petar Vlahov's 2005 attempt to interview her for Nova TV drew widespread criticism for not discussing crimes against Croats (Šimundić-Bendić 2005). Her music was nonetheless available on pirate cassettes/CDs and online, and was 'even' sold legitimately in certain independent retailers. In 2006 and 2007, two of her compilations (and approximately 20 more imported Serbian CDs) were on sale in the Zagreb department-store Nama, and the 'folk' category in ringtone advertisements usually included some of her songs.

Ceca and Thompson are so often apostrophised as twin symbols of 'non-culture', village mentality, etc. that one could almost conceptualise a distancing strategy of 'thompsonandceca' by analogy with Cynthia Enloe's 'womenandchildren' (Enloe 1990, in Yuval-Davies 2003:9). The image of extreme Croatian nationalists happily listening to the wife/widow of a paramilitary known for murdering Croats (and Bosniaks) appears to date back to Darko Hudelist's 1995 reports on folk, where he acknowledged the paradox that 'the Serbian folk-song in Croatia has actually been rehabilitated by Herzegovinans and Croatian Army members' (based on anecdotes about Herzegovinans in folk clubs requesting Ustaša songs then Serbian or Bosniak ones) (Čulić 1995a). His observation accreted into a quick journalistic cliché (Baker 2007:145–6).

5.2.2 Ethno, parody and sampling: when is folk not 'folk'?

Ethno music, parody and sampling all draw on folk but stand outside the 'folk' category because a different creative relationship is ascribed to them. In the discursive field of Croatian music production and criticism, 'turbofolk' and 'ethno' stand at opposite poles of a binary value-judgement about the use of folk in contemporary music-making: whereas 'turbofolk' connotes misused folklore, 'ethno' stands for a respectful-yet-progressive approach to tradition. Ethno's post-2000 status built on the 1990s ethno revival (3.2.3), the strong academic ethnomusicological tradition and the long-lasting prestige of the state folk music/dance ensemble Lado (see Shay 2002). Lidija Bajuk, Mojmir Novaković and Dunja Knebl remained active, and a younger ethno generation emerged in bands like Afion – whose members, in their twenties, had been inspired by the revival's first wave.

The Croatian idea of 'ethno' parallels its use in Serbia, where 'ethno' was imagined in the 1990s as a new way to make 'popular music with a folkloric basis' while avoiding the problems of NCFM/narodnjaci/turbo folk, which the 'cultural elite [...] dismissed as a valueless imitation of folklore' (Čolović 2006:5). Čolović thus indicates that ethno's development was inseparable from existing disputes about (in)appropriate uses of folk – though oddly does not mention Croatian ethno. 'Inappropriate' folk (turbofolk/narodnjaci) symbolised 'primitivism' in the widespread discourse about post-socialist clientelist elites (Jansen 2005a:126–7). In Croatia, ethno also overlaps with the so-called 'alternative' – a taste-culture which celebrates difference from the mainstream through niche musical preferences, feminist/LGBT activism, and environmentalism (one of its major concerns in 2007 was campaigning against the Cvjetni trg redevelopment in central Zagreb). Dunja Knebl, for instance, has often held ethno workshops at Močvara, Zagreb's perennially-underfunded alternative cultural centre. Lidija Bajuk once called ethno 'the most alternative music scene in Croatia', and saw it as an opportunity to educate audiences in appreciating folk traditions (Prnjak 2004).

As a prestigious category, the authority to name or perform ethno is often claimed, accepted or rejected. The contentiousness of the 'folk' label has often led Croatian pop performers/composers to associate themselves with ethno and avoid the socio-cultural otherness of 'folk': e.g. in 2002 Magazin's new album contained a duet with the renowned Macedonian Roma singer Esmā Redžepova. Their vocalist Jelena Rozga said that one version was 'completely an ethno-version' with Redžepova's musicians and another was 'typical world ethno-pop' (Morić 2002a). *Nacional* nonetheless called it a 'trash-narodnjak' which followed 'the Leskovac–Vranje–Kumanovo highway' (central Serbian towns) to 'the first kafana' (the classic locale of live folk music and loose women) (Čulić 2002b). Incorporating ethno-musicians in showbusiness events can also make a claim to prestige: after the scandal surrounding Severina in Dora 2006 (5.2.3), Doras 2007 and 2008 included Miroslav Evačić then Tamara Obrovac (the Istrian ethno-jazz musician), although neither won. Hrvoje Crnić-Boxer, whose electronic music has sampled Lado recordings, once argued that musicians claimed the ethno label because folk had acquired 'unpleasant connotations' for 'political reasons', thus 'people here [u nas] consider what is actually folk to be ethno' (Ćustić 1999). He did not, however, define ethno himself.

The type of Roma music recognised internationally as 'world music' (e.g. Esmā Redžepova, Šaban Bajramović or Boban Marković, rather than Haris Džinović's showbusiness-oriented music) also qualifies as 'ethno'. Marković's and Redžepova's 2001–

02 Zagreb concerts established Roma music's image as a non-mass-market good: Marković performed at Močvara, and Redžepova at the Lisinski hall (the leading art-music venue). In a Bourdieu-like symbolic distinction system (Bourdieu 1984), both venues would be associated with high cultural capital – although Močvara is more a location of what Sarah Thornton (1995) calls 'subcultural capital', i.e. the cultural capital of a self-proclaimed underground/alternative. Miljenko Jergović (2002b) argued that enthusiasm for Roma music connected people from various taste-cultures who shared an 'unambiguous urban identity' which explicitly rejected 'every Huljić product [huljićevštine]' – leading to the potentially 'absurd' result of 'brass orchestras from Serbia' not standing for Yugoslav NCFM but connecting Croatian audiences into 'global music trends'. His argument drew on various ascribed symbols of the turbofolk lifestyle (Ceca; Severina; village mentality; expensive cars; pollution of public space) to illustrate what Roma-music audiences were *not* longing for. Reviewing Redžepova's concert itself, Jergović (2002c) viewed it as an important sign of elite attitudes to folk and cultural easternness evolving from the 1990s' simple oppositions – although complained that '[s]itting in a concert-hall' and 'the huge and distant stage' did not suit 'this music's spirit' and it might have been better held elsewhere.

How to evaluate and enjoy Roma music is not resolved in everyday life either. I saw one concert by Kal (a Roma group from Belgrade) with Nevenka, an airline employee in her thirties who liked 'alternative' music, Darko Rundek, Damir Urban, and 'listen[ed] to ethno, but not turbofolk'. While her friend drove us there and back, he played a CD of fast-and-furious trumpet-playing by the Romanian Roma band Fanfare Ciocaria (as if framing the excursion?). Unfortunately, Nevenka came home disappointed: people were listening not dancing, Kal had not played fast enough and (the main problem) they did not have trumpeters. When Kal had performed at a Balkan music festival in London, the publicity had made much of their *not* being a traditional Roma band, so different criteria/definitions of authenticity/Gypsyism seemed to apply. Perhaps participating in world-music consumption (which raises problematic questions of power and essentialism (Hutnyk 2000)) brings one closer to the west even though one consumes something which is locally eastern (6.3.2).

Other ways for folk not to be classified as folk involve parody and sampling. Vatrogasci, Croatia's first folk parodists, began by covering international pop songs with humorous Croatian lyrics and imitating NCFM vocals (Hazzadar 1993), then gradually turning to domestic hits – including a controversial Thompson parody mocking his village origin and his broken marriage. The Rijeka art-rockers Let 3 designed their 2005 album

Bombardiranje Srbije i Čačka (*The bombing of Serbia and Čačak*) to satirise Yugoslav/Balkan machismo, militarism, folk music and moustaches, containing ‘trash-metal’ NCFM covers: they said they ‘wanted to make an album about what people here are most afraid of [...] peasantness [seljaštvo] and pornography’ (Tomić 2005). Their broadly-defined NCFM included not only Šaban Šaulić, a traditional Macedonian song (*Zurle trestat*), a Likan/Herzegovinan/Montenegrin song claimed by several traditions (*Pjevaj mi, pjevaj, sokole*), a Serbian patriotic song (*Rado ide Srbin u vojnike*) and *Ero s onoga svijeta* (satirising Thompson as well as Gotovac?), but also the Croatian singer Mišo Kovač – thematically similar to Bosnian/Serbian/Macedonian NCFM although his zabavna arrangements were musically distinct. However, parody brings with it a danger that listeners may not get the joke: Darko Hudelist (1995) suggested that most of Vatrogasci’s listeners actually took them seriously.¹⁸⁷ They have certainly been booked by folk nightclubs – not something likely to happen to Let 3.

Perhaps the most detailed use of folk music to narrate identity comes from Edo Maajka, a Tuzla-born MC who settled in Croatia during the war in Bosnia and often uses ‘samples with oriental overtones’ implying his Bosnian origin (Bosanac 2004:119). This and his Bosnian lexis (his 2006 album-title *Stig'o ćumur* (*The coal is here*) uses Bosnian slang for ‘coal’) follow hip-hop’s ethos of claiming visibility for stigmatised minorities (Ivo Žanić, personal communication, 16 March 2007). Hip-hop communicative codes recognise sampling as a way to integrally link other musicians or cultural icons into texts, making it a powerful tool in recontextualising hip-hop outside its original context of US cultural/racial politics (Androutsopoulos and Schotz 2003:470). Edo Maajka described *sevdah* as an important aspect of his musical upbringing alongside 1980s Yugoslav rock and US rock and rap (Lasić 2002) – which can also add meaning through sampling: e.g. NWA’s famous ‘woop woop’ from *Fuck the police* appears on Maajka’s *Trpaj* (*Shove*) about police brutality.¹⁸⁸ What connects ethno, parody and sampling is that they all include what might be literally considered folk music but do not fall under the culturally-constructed label of ‘folk’. Indeed, all three performatively reject folk – clarifying folk’s meaning as a category by explaining what folk is not.

¹⁸⁷ Always a danger when parodying folk: ‘turbo folk’ itself was originally coined satirically (Gordy 1999:114).

¹⁸⁸ His 2004 song *Prži* (*Burn*) mocked commercial pop-folk crossover and celebrity culture with an exaggerated folk-like chorus. He ironically called one 2006 track *Severina* to manipulate people into hearing it.

5.2.3 *Moja štikla*, 2006¹⁸⁹

Cases like Severina's 2006 song *Moja štikla* (*My stiletto*) indicate that 1990s debates have continued after 2000 although the political imperative for cultural separation has weakened, and 'turbofolk'/'ethno' have endured as boundary-marking symbols. *Štikla*'s incorporation of folk song/dance from Zagora and Herzegovina involved a region which made those cultural boundaries ambiguous. The 1990s national media had systematically marginalised Dinaric music (e.g. gusle playing, polyphonic 'ganga' singing) while heavily promoting music from Dalmatia and Slavonia (Pettan 1996). *Štikla* was even more problematic because it represented Croatia at Eurovision, thus exposing an object of local sensitivity to the gaze of 'Europe' itself (see 6.3.1). The strategies used to ascribe or deny the song Croatianness and resolve its ambiguity bring together many familiar concepts from this thesis (turbofolk, Dinara, language, Europe, authenticity). They thus exemplify the narration of identity in Croatian cultural politics.

Besides Thompson and Mate Bulić, explicitly Dinaric-based popular music had been rare before *Štikla*. A band called Mobitel (including two teenage female gusle-playing models) had parodied stereotypes of mobile phone-using Herzegovinans at a 1997 Mostar pop-festival, and an abortive project in 1998–99 sought to lay ganga over German-style techno music for potential export, repackaging a Herzegovinan folklore club as the 'Herceg Boys' (Hudelst 1998b).¹⁹⁰ Alenka Milano's song at Neum Etnofest 2003 imitated the structure of that year's Turkish Eurovision winner but used Dinaric vocals (o'kanje) as backing. Dinaric instruments could also be used in what remained of the semi-underground 'Croatian narodnjaci' movement. Slađana Petrušić's *Kada cura ima sve* (*When a girl has everything*, 2005) ended lines with Dinaric rising vocals and included a gusle break in the middle eight – while celebrating women's power to use their sexuality to make men buy things, a common preoccupation of south-east European pop-folk. Unlike these precedents, *Štikla*'s performer was much better-known and the song was created for a professionally prestigious site, HTV's Eurovision selection. This made its ambiguity and folk-ness more problematic.

Even before *Štikla*, Severina's persona was linked to folk. Her songs exemplified the mainstream Croatian folk-pop crossover (although I was so often greeted with laughter after asking about Severina's music that she might be better known for celebrity and sex-scandals than musical achievements), and in critical discourse she operated as a symbol of

¹⁸⁹ See Baker 2008b.

¹⁹⁰ They did not seem to view their open praise of Ante Pavelić/the NDH as a barrier to success abroad (Žanić 2007:85).

the meanings typically ascribed to folk – e.g. a lack of cultural discernment, an inadequately-urbanised mentality, brashly-accumulated wealth and a fascination with the post-socialist elite (Prica 2004:148–51). Severina's symbolic value was particularly evident in 2003 when SDP booked her at a high price for their election rallies. SDP's music policy during the 1999 elections (3.3.3) had traded on rock's social connotations (urbanity, progressiveness and tolerance), the opposite pole to Severina in rock/folk symbolism. Hiring Severina violated the tacit expectation that a performer's persona should be compatible with the party's values, and the mismatch became more glaring after their leader engaged in uncharacteristically-populist rhetoric. By 2006 Severina was therefore already the subject of conflict in cultural politics.

Štikla was composed for Severina by Boris Novković (Đorđe's son), who had represented Croatia in Eurovision 2005 using various 'ethno' elements (bagpipes played by a Lado member, Stjepan Večković; ducat necklaces for the female backing-vocalists, also from Lado; lyrical references to the Danube) – unlike his usual pop-rock. Severina's song became immediately noteworthy when an arrangement was commissioned from Goran Bregović, a former rock-guitarist from Sarajevo who had successfully turned to world and film music. Although Bregović came from a mixed ethnic background (including Croatian relatives), his use of Serbian Roma music and his association with the film director Emir Kusturica provided resources to ascribe a Serbian identity to him. One Serbian tabloid treated Bregović as a Serb when it compared *Štikla* to his typical style and 'dancing-songs from Serbia' ('srbijanskim poskočicama') (*Kurir* 2006a). It printed the lyrics in ekavica, as usual when Serbian tabloids reprint ijekavica speech. Following *Kurir*, a Croatian tabloid claimed *Štikla* itself was in ekavica and escalated things by asking a right-wing politician and veterans' activist to comment (Babić 2006) – even though *Štikla* used the Herzegovinan/Dalmatian ikavica dialect. This combination of musical and linguistic otherness had been produced by newspapers, but set the tone for further comment where Severina and Novković talked about what made *Štikla* Croatian and others talked about what excluded it.

In justifying *Štikla*'s appropriateness, Severina and Novković both enumerated its various Croatian elements and gave reasons distinguishing it from Serbian culture. Severina explained that it contained 'lindo, ganga, rera, šijavica and other autochthonous Croatian musical moments' so she would 'not know where we are' if someone called that 'Serbian folklore' (Matić 2006). Novković also responded to allegations that the song was 'turbofolk' which had developed when newspapers invited comments from ethno-

musicians, bringing 'ethno'/'turbofolk' symbolism to bear: even Večković playing a *lijerica* (a gusle-like bowed lyre) was apparently not enough to code it unproblematically as ethno.¹⁹¹ Novković directly equated turbofolk with Serbia and ekavica, and invoked political and historical narratives of Croatia's distinctiveness from Serbia/the east to explain why *Štikla* could be confused with neither of them: Serbis was 'the crossroads of Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania' so it was normal for 'Serbian turbofolk' to be 'based on the East', but 'we flirted more with Austria–Hungary, Slovenia, Germany' and so that had not happened in Croatia – besides, there was no way backing singers 'from Dičmo, Čavoglave and Drniš, where they have very strong patriotic feelings' could be 'force[d] [...] to sing ekavica' (Ivić 2006). Interestingly, Đorđe Novković used to discuss his own music the same way, observing that *ojkanje* was entirely distinct from Serbian folk.

The Dora organiser Aleksandar Kostadinov, professionally responsible for *Štikla*, also defended its appropriateness. Kostadinov argued that the song was suitable for Eurovision's European audience and supposed that its 'break-beat', resembling Shakira as well as Bregović, would go down a storm in 'slightly gay' 'Euro-disco' clubs (using the east to more successfully address the west?). He defined turbofolk as 'Serbian newly-composed music performed by, say, Lepa Brena or Jelena Karleuša' – i.e. something *Štikla* self-evidently was not. However, he also relied on broader discourses of national cultural boundaries, mentioning various symbols which could be considered exclusively Croatian: Dubrovnik's *linđo* dance; the *lijerica*, used for *linđo*; *rera*, sung in Zagora/Herzegovina; costumes from Herzegovina's Neretva river region (Rožman 2006a).

The *Štikla* controversy suited HTV's goal of heightening interest around its Eurovision selection: Severina's victory was even made the lead item on HTV's talk show *Otvoreno* the next day although the wartime Croatian Serb leader Milan Babić had just committed suicide in The Hague. HTV's high hopes that Severina might win Eurovision were not fulfilled – her 56 points included near-maximum votes from ex-Yugoslav countries where her persona and cultural references were already intelligible, and little from elsewhere. However, *Štikla* was twice re-presented after Dora for domestic audiences: first by inviting Let 3 rather than Lado members to play backing singers in a deliberately kitsch video,¹⁹² and later by returning to the song's pre-Bregović version, which Severina entered in Splitski festival that July.¹⁹³ This version, renamed *Moj sokole* (*My falcon*) from its original name

¹⁹¹ One musician I met who self-identified with the ethno movement was critical of Večković's involvement in a project which he felt had not taken ethno seriously.

¹⁹² They also performed *Ero* at the Porin awards in copies of Severina's dress (Goreta 2006).

¹⁹³ Later withdrawn on a technicality.

Hrvatski sokole (*Croatian falcon*), depicted natural beauty and essentialised gender roles rather than *Štikla*'s salacious nonsense-rhymes. As such it fitted patriotic showbusiness's established niche in the industry, even though – unusually for such music by 2006 (see 4.6.3) – it was performed by a woman.¹⁹⁴ Informants that summer remembered hearing *Sokole* on radio much more often than *Štikla* (I certainly heard *Sokole* several times on Narodni radio, *Štikla* not at all). *Sokole*'s patriotic slant and the excision of Bregović's material made it no more (un)problematic than any other Dinaric pop song, and Croatian radio's domestic-only reach avoided the potential sensitivities of *Štikla*'s transnational performance.¹⁹⁵

Croatian Dora winners/Eurovision entries after *Štikla*, meanwhile, represented higher-prestige musical styles: in 2007 a pop-rock ballad, and in 2008 a group in the style award-winning Spanish and Cuban world-music bands. This was despite Jurica Pavičić's argument (2006) that coming to terms with Croatian culture's Balkan aspects would actually make Croatia a *more* European nation, although this might have been too risky for HTV after *Štikla*. One pop manager reflected an appropriate modernisation of Croatian folklore for Eurovision might have been a male pop tenor backed by a klapa, which would 'connect the modern and the autochthonous, [and] show Europe our interestingness packed in a modern way acceptable to them' (Rožman 2007a).¹⁹⁶ Severina's association with Bregović extended to her 2008 album *Zdravo Marija* (*Hail Mary*), with lyrics (in Croatian) by Marina Tucaković from Belgrade – a trans-republican collaboration that would have been unremarkable in Yugoslav showbusiness. The lead single *Gas, gas* (with a lascivious lyric about lorry-drivers) resembled Bregović's energetic brass-band compositions, and Bregović also performed it himself in his interval performance when Belgrade hosted Eurovision 2008.

5.3 Music and personal identity

5.3.1 Music as a social experience

This thesis has largely concentrated on how groups with professional stakes in music narrate identity through music or talking about it. However, identity narratives are

¹⁹⁴ Antonija Šola's generalised patriotic song in Dora 2008 (*Gdje je srce, tu je dom – Home's where the heart is*), with a pop-tamburica arrangement, also transgressed this boundary. It topped the public vote at Dora but scored badly with the jury and was not selected.

¹⁹⁵ *Štikla* even acquired its own rap parody, Ante Cash's *Moja cikla* (*My beetroot*).

¹⁹⁶ Luka Nižetić actually entered this for selection in 2005, but lost out to Boris Novković.

individual as well as collective – so it is also worth considering whether and how people use popular music to narrate identities in their everyday lives. Accordingly, I asked informants to reflect on what music meant to them and on particularly-enjoyable experiences they had had with music. Their diverse responses – and my own observations at musical events – suggested that music tended to be most meaningful as the lubricant for social experiences. Music enabled euphoric physical activity, simultaneous emotional release with others, a feeling of togetherness with fellow band-members, and/or a guarantee of spending time in pleasant and suitable company. I soon discovered that my own analytical relationship to music as a researcher was not shared by the people I talked to or experienced music with.¹⁹⁷

Music could be the reason for going out and spending time with people (at a concert), or – no less importantly – could generate the atmosphere for a successful social experience in a ‘community of sentiment’ (Fonarow 2006:159) whether going out or staying in. Young people in particular set much store by particular venues: in Zagreb, the club Purgeraj was a favourite, and people who associated themselves with particular taste cultures (e.g. hip-hop, metal) also enjoyed spending time at Močvara. Choices were less wide in the Slavonian town I visited, where I frequently heard that only one or two ‘normal’ cafes/bars existed – the others, according to Antun, were populated entirely by men with PTSD, continually played Narodni radio and were situated next to bookmakers.

Given economic constraints and/or a lack of suitable destinations, young people often socialised by ‘staying in’ instead (sometimes the only way to achieve a desired musical atmosphere e.g. if you wanted to listen to Azra in the early 1990s). The music at my colleague Dražen’s birthday party was generally North American and ex-Yugoslav rock, but more playful tracks surfaced later on: *Ruža hrvatska* occasioned raucous singing of its famous chorus, and music from Bregović’s *Underground* soundtrack elicited frenetic dancing. Much the same thing happened at a party hosted by Leo, a fan of trance music, when shortly before midnight somebody began to play Thompson’s *Dolazak Hrvata* and provoked instant laughter (before another guest told Leo to turn it off and Leo explained its incongruous presence through my having apparently left it on his computer). Carol Silverman (2008:53) observed similar practices in Bulgaria, where non-Roma typically danced the Roma wedding dance kyuchek during late stages of celebrations, which she saw as ‘enacting the perceived freedom and unbridled sexuality of “the Other”’. If there was an Other here, it was not the internal Gypsy of Mattijs van de Port’s research (1998) in Novi

¹⁹⁷ Nor did I leave it ‘in the field’ – I once came back from a Pet Shop Boys concert in London ready to draft notes about ‘invention of tradition’ (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) in one of their songs about the Royals...

Sad, but perhaps an internal Hrvatina (hyper-Croat) – a comment on the years of patriotic public discourse with which these young people had grown up?

When I explained to people (especially students) that I was researching popular music, they usually thought it was to do with subcultures: as contentious as the term's academic use has become, the categorisation obviously still had meaning when people organised their thoughts with it (see Perasović 2001). 'Subcultures' seemed to be understood as groups which displayed a collective identity through tastes in music and dress (exactly how Ines Prica (1991) had described them). Some students, like Juraj (who listened to hip-hop and, when I met him, was wearing the corresponding dress of hooded sweatshirts and baggy jeans), did describe themselves as belonging to a subculture; some others, like Maja, used a related concept, the 'alternative'. For Maja, the 'alternative' was a set of musical genres which would not 'bother' people who listened to other genres within the set – thus techno and narodnjaci (which both bothered her) would not belong. Maja liked to wear black clothes and dark eye make-up, and said she had noticed old ladies giving her strange glances on the tram. She had found people more likely to talk to someone dressed similarly to themselves because they knew they would not get looked down on for their musical tastes. Yet subcultures too had their own mainstreams and exclusionary mechanisms – at least according to Lana, who had found that if you turned up 'there' without the right clothes or piercings you would get the message you did not belong (as had happened to her once in Močvara). Lana felt this undercut the alternative's supposed inclusivity, and considered a 'real alternative' would be something 'everyone can listen to regardless of what they've got on.' In all these stories, musical tastes were ways to regulate the environment of sociability, ensuring a like-minded group (or, *pace* Kertzner (1988) and Cohen (1985), a group which thought they were like-minded) and guarding against incursions.

5.3.2 Narratives about folk

Everyone has a story to tell about 'folk' – and more often than not it is the same one. Folk is taking over the city, encroaching into one's own social space from outskirts, suburbs or villages which do not belong to 'the city' proper. It proverbially pumps out of ostentatious cars at traffic-lights,¹⁹⁸ and annoys public-transport passengers when teenagers play it through phone speakers. Folk clubs are dangerous places populated by gangsters, footballers, prostitutes and celebrities; people who probably listen to folk can be recognised

¹⁹⁸ Most over-zealous car stereos I encountered were playing hip-hop or dance: perhaps I was standing at traffic lights in the wrong part of Zagreb.

on the street by their dress or even their characteristically-Herzegovinan physiognomy, and can be colourfully demonstrated to visiting researchers.¹⁹⁹ The visiting researcher might respond with some observations from her own lifeworld's common-sense assumptions about 'chavs' or 'UK garage' music and realise she is less reflective about her home environment than she would like to think.²⁰⁰

Folk listeners themselves were certainly underrepresented in my research, and the 'stereotypical' folk listener was not represented at all (except as narrated by friends/relatives). People I met who did listen to folk in certain ways had very situational relationships to it (they might see it as camp; play it at parties when drunk; switch to pop-folk on satellite to comment with friends about the otherness of Serbs), they did not describe themselves as 'listening to' folk (or Thompson) in the classificatory sense, they still told stories about folk-in-the-city, and none were teenagers – the focus of the mid-2000s folk debate in Croatia. Researching folk among teenagers would have required particular sensitivity to the supposed group's frequent othering in the media and everyday discourse, and investigating folk among teenagers would also have been problematic practically. Parental consent would have been necessary before working with any teenagers (and might not have been forthcoming if parents disapproved of folk and its social activities or teenagers wanted to keep it out of their parents' sight), and UK law would have required that I apply for a background check at home (potentially disrupting fieldwork if I had to complete documentation in Britain).

Folk was nonetheless the most common musical topic throughout my fieldwork, and people discussed it whether or not I was participating in conversations. Many people had noticed folk gaining popularity in the last 5–10 years (1997–2002), potentially reflecting structural changes in Croatian entertainment and maybe politics. They had several explanations, mainly associated with youth: perhaps folk appealed because it contravened 'traditional' values and parents disapproved; perhaps some young people spread family folk habits by bringing music into school; perhaps teenagers thought the best-looking boys and girls were at folk clubs. If the trend was thought to have begun in a particular place, it was Bosnia not Serbia (even though the media usually apostrophised the trend as for 'Serbian folk'). Maja remembered that folk had been less popular in her schooldays than today and most people who listened to it came from Bosnia-Herzegovina. She then added that her own parents were also from there (having moved from Bosanska Posavina to Zagreb in

¹⁹⁹ Stef Jansen (2005b:151) had this experience too.

²⁰⁰ Consumption-based value-judgements about 'chavs': see Skeggs 2005; Nayak 2006.

1984) but ‘that was never in our family’. The contrast between long-established city-dwellers (*starosedioici*) and newcomers (*‘došljaci*’) is another common image in anti-folk urbanist discourses which accuse folk-listening newcomers of lacking culture (Jansen 2005a:118). However, Maja’s story indicates that *‘staros(j)edioci*’ are a relative, situational concept. Narrating experiences from a *starosjedilac* viewpoint helps tell them in a recognised way even when the narrator’s circumstances might not correspond to the term’s literal meaning.

The tendency to talk about folk/*narodnjaci* using some sort of distancing strategy was often noticeable – as if any expertise about folk needed to be explained away lest the interviewer (visiting from a culturally-prestigious European city...) think they actually listened to it themselves. Amanda, with lots to say about folk, described herself as ‘innocent’ because her younger brother listened to it. I asked her what ‘turbofolk’ was and she explained, before saying that ‘I don’t listen to them [*slušam*], I just hear them [*čujem*]’. Lana spent several minutes setting out her theory that *narodnjaci* appealed to people who needed alcohol to express emotions. Once or twice she had happened to go somewhere they played that music because people talked her into it at the end of an evening (everything else being closed at 2 a.m.), but found it depressing and quickly left. Folk was also a boundary-symbol for likes/dislikes: informants often declared wide musical tastes which amounted to ‘anything except *narodnjaci*’, and indeed sometimes it seemed easier to say what they did *not* like.

The anything-but-folk discourse has intriguing similarities to a US sociologist’s 1990s findings about rap and metal. Bethany Bryson (1996) found that people with generally-high musical tolerance tended to strongly dislike those two genres– ‘anything but metal’ or ‘anything but rap’, so argued that rap and metal attracted ‘symbolic exclusion’ because of their low class connotations. Bryson (1996:884–6) concluded that ‘individuals use[d] cultural taste to reinforce symbolic boundaries between themselves and categories of people they dislike’, drawing on Bourdieu’s concept of ‘distinction’ through dislike/exclusion (Bourdieu 1984). Stef Jansen (2005b:159) has already proposed using ‘distinction’ to explain anti-eastern/anti-Balkan discourses, so Bryson further supports the argument. Although one cannot simplistically map US class-structure onto Croatia, folk certainly seems associated with socio-economic distaste for particular groups – although in Croatia’s post-war post-transition economy the ‘othered’ group could well be more economically successful than the ‘otherers’.

Looking at how people narrated their relationship to folk during interviews eclipsed my original intentions of gauging whether the discourses employed by music professionals in cultural-political struggles also appeared in everyday life. In this respect there were usually fewer references to particular figures as symbols, but it emerged that the meanings of these symbols were not always fixed. The dance group Colonia were an exemplar of negative pop-folk influences to one music critic, but a positive symbol according to Goran, a local radio worker in Slavonia (Colonia came from a small Slavonian town which had produced a disproportionately-large number of bands). In Goran's narrative, the group owed their breakthrough to their local radio-station, which strove to set high musical criteria and address an 'urban' audience. Other, larger Slavonian towns lacked such a station, and Goran viewed Colonia as vindicating the station's (and his) mission to promote and defend city culture.

Two important issues in professional/media discourse about folk were the use of 'turbofolk' as a boundary-symbol and the *Moja štikla* controversy. Informants' interest in them varied widely. Sometimes people did not have an immediate definition of 'turbofolk' even though they had used it, but most thought it related to a transformation of folk music. Its spatial associations, if any, were with Serbia and places further east – 'a combination of those Serbian narodnjaci and then even more eastern ones, so with that strong, Turkish, oriental melos'; 'Serbian and they howl' (implying the characteristic vocal melismatics of post-Ottoman music). One student, an amateur musician, quoted Rambo Amadeus's original definition of turbofolk as 'the combustion of the people'. Goran interpreted folk as contextual, arguing that the same song would work differently if given to Pussycat Dolls (an R&B girlband, ex-burlesque dancers), Justin Timberlake or Ceca, because 'the image has been made already'.²⁰¹ In the hands (or throat) of Ceca, 'the voice' (which he imitated) and 'the picture' would make it folk.

Many informants had strong opinions about *Štikla* (which had happened recently), but the boundary-marking practices structuring media responses were not so important in interviews or ordinary conversation. The question of whether *Štikla* had represented Croatia 'appropriately' did not come up unless I prompted it, although it did lead some respondents to reflect more widely on contemporary uses of Croatian folklore. Antonija, for instance, agreed with Boris Novković that the singing was Likan, but thought they had somehow made it sound more 'eastern' and less like 'that classical tradition of Croatian folk

²⁰¹ From a feminist perspective little might distinguish Pussycat Dolls from Ceca, except (resorting to a Croatian journalistic truism) that none of the Pussycat Dolls had married Arkan.

[narodne] music' ('they' were unnamed – Bregović?). Marijana thought it was acceptable to revitalise Croatian folk music like the young ethno group Afion (who used African drums), but not like Severina. Amanda established an ironic distance between herself and Croatian popular/zabavna music in general (she watched Dora to see how awful it could get), and expected that Severina's Eurovision audience must have thought 'look at those great big peasants [seljačine] jumping around with gusle...'. Those who appreciated *Štikla* did so for its parodic value. Lana thought the Let 3 collaboration showed what Severina thought of 'that music' – and Juraj (who enjoyed 'joke songs' anyway) thought it was the only Severina song he had ever liked.

5.3.3 (Not) visiting a folk club

The folk nightclub is the central space of the urban narrative about folk. It attracts violence, annoys hard-working residents, and ought to be in the city's 'outskirts' – although it is encroaching on the 'very centre' all the time. Besides the aftermath of the early-2006 nightclub shootings, more folk-in-the-city scandals broke out during my fieldwork: three Croatian footballers were dropped after breaking curfew to party at a folk club; Zagrebački velesajam was booked for a large folk concert (6.1.5); the Pasha club moved from out-of-town to somewhere more central near Cibona. Since 'city identity' in ex-Yugoslavia tends to signify 'a promise or potential for cosmopolitanism' rather than an actual territory/place (Volčič 2005a:656), the folk club represents a physical threat to the values which give the city its cityness. Of course, something combining Serbian, Turkish, Iranian, Arabic, Roma, Indian and Black Atlantic music is certainly cosmopolitan in one sense. But it is not the 'right' sort of cosmopolitanism for the prevailing ex-Yugoslav city worldview.

Media representations of folk nightclubs did appear to have influenced popular perceptions of them. Informants' opinions about folk clubs shared press preoccupations in a way that did not happen with e.g. the Severina controversy, despite the column-inches/broadcast hours devoted to it). Journalists employ various strategies to mark folk clubs as other and dangerous, such as the use of flood/invasion metaphors, the essentialisation of the existing city identity, or the convention that folk clubs require journalistic explanation and interpretation for an imagined reader who necessarily does not belong to the milieu (Baker 2007). The standard visit-to-a-folk-club feature involves driving somewhere remote, being frisked for weapons, describing clubgoers' hedonistic sexualised behaviour, and encountering stereotyped groups of clientele who do not take kindly to photographers being there. In fact, *Jutarnji list* was able to break the Pasha

shooting story in January 2006 because reporters were compiling one such feature when it happened. The sense of folk clubs threatening city identity is strongest in local news: hence the *Jutarnji list* metro section's overview of 'the eastern melos taking over the centre of Zagreb' after the Pasha move (Sućević and Panić 2007), or two articles on noise nuisance from folk clubs in Požega – both mentioning it could even be heard in Holy Trinity Square – in *Večernji list*'s Slavonian pullout (Topić 2006; Sekulić Pojer 2007).²⁰² Locally-recognised symbols of urban identity and character stood for the community, folk clubs' cultural and sonic disruption for its opposite.

Folk clubs' structural story is less colourful but probably more informative. Experts and amateur musicians offered me many structural reasons for the clubs' expansion and the relative lack of other performance venues (especially outside Zagreb), which they all considered had prevented new rock bands emerging. Socialist-era youth clubs had been sold off, turned into privately-owned discotheques and often ended up as folk clubs (apparently this had not happened in Ljubljana, which therefore had a more 'diverse' music scene). An exception was Rijeka's 'spirit', atmosphere and number of live-music-friendly clubs ('live music' meaning rock, rather than folk clubs' 'live music' which amounted to a vocalist and keyboardist). The media were not conducive to new bands either: newspapers were oriented towards picture layouts and so preferred pop acts (said one critic, opening the newspaper he worked for and pointing to a pretty pop singer on the showbusiness page), and there were no specialised rock magazines like Britain had (a couple had been launched, like *Feral music* or *Nomad*, but quickly folded). Town councils did not give potential venues enough support (e.g. the Močvara controversy; a member of an 'alternative' cultural centre in a small town near Zagreb said the local council would rather book a famous band for Valentine's Day than fund them). In post-socialist Croatia's market-driven cultural environment, folk clubs' low performance overheads and high bar turnovers could drive out competition.

Even though my research into the media had suggested the trope of the folk club visit was currently the Croatian musical encounter with otherness par excellence, I thought I should try to visit one if possible, despite a distinct unease about the prospect (let alone how to represent it afterwards). I put my unease down to several reasons: what would I wear (without make-up or tight, revealing clothes would I look out of place?), what would happen if somebody realised I was foreign, whether I would pass the door policy, and

²⁰² The 2007 article, shortly before Požega's tamburica festival, quoted an unnamed man naming various historical/musical symbols (Požega's 710th anniversary; tamburica; Prljavo Kazalište) to emphasise that 'turbofolk'/accordions did not belong there (Sekulić Pojer 2007).

whether I would feel as uncomfortable as I usually did at 'home' when everyone was expected to dance spontaneously. The visit never happened anyway, despite several approaches to contacts in Zagreb and Slavonia. Perhaps they were equally uneasy about taking me; perhaps they did not want to encounter folk so closely themselves.

My nearest attempt at arranging a visit was through Nataša, a lecturer whose cousin often went to Lampaši (on the Zagreb–Karlovac road) and was apparently prepared for me to go with her friends. For some reason it came to nothing, so Nataša consulted her filmmaker friend Davor about a visit even though she was frightened of folk clubs (after hearing lurid police anecdotes from her husband). Davor (who had filmed in one club) suggested telephoning a club-owner he knew, but I demurred so as not to draw attention to myself. Nataša said that if things 'went bad' I would need the owner's support, at which Davor tried to argue folk clubs were not as dangerous as all that; Nataša replied that he had power [because] he was 2 m tall, had a camera and was male. Interestingly, Nataša did not feel Močvara was threatening even after I asked her about violent incidents there (a few months previously someone had been shot outside, and skinheads had once attacked visitors during a documentary about a Serbian footballer). Indeed, she felt safe there and considered that 'they feel like our people [naši ljudi]'. This was quite a contrast to my own feelings ('common-sense' assumptions about personal safety in British cities) about Močvara and its secluded riverside location. I felt secure enough inside but not outside, and I would never have walked home from it late at night – as Nataša had in her student days.

Conclusion

The cultural-political struggles surrounding music in the 2000s were rarely as bitter as their counterparts in the 1990s (ch. 3), despite critics' ongoing resentment of folk-pop and Narodni radio, and politicised identity-narratives were less often resources for professional competition. Perhaps with Tuđman's death, Račan's and Mesić's elections and HRT's reform as a public broadcaster, everyday decision-making was no longer structured by a need to continually re-establish cultural boundaries according to a dominant presidential ideology. The decline of this ideologised imperative also limited opportunities to delegitimise competitors by publicly associating them with breaching the 1990s' prevailing ethnicised ideology. Yet those culturalist discourses nonetheless remained available and legitimate for sales-driven media to produce controversy with, as in the *Moja štikla* case.

A second explanation for the decreased vehemence of cultural politics might be structural and technological changes in broadcasting. Music programming became increasingly marginal to terrestrial television, although the only free-to-air TV/radio outlet with an entirely musical and domestic playlist (Narodni radio) was sometimes thought to have lowest-common-denominator standards and a negative effect on quality. With less music broadcast anyway, one significant motor of 1990s intra-professional conflicts (potential high royalties) was replaced with generalised antagonism towards HRT, uniting 1990s winners and losers. Politicised 1990s-style struggles between musicians might yet be revived in a multi-channel environment after digital switchover makes extra music channels available to most viewers, or might just have been part of finding a new basis for a national entertainment industry immediately after the state was established.

The most problematic musical issue after 2000 was the boundary-marking symbolism of Bosnian/Serbian showbusiness-folk and its purported domestic imitation. The claims and counter-claims against *Moja štikla*, accentuated by the prospect of external scrutiny by European viewers, competed for authority to endorse authenticity and fix the nation's cultural boundaries. They thus demonstrated the continuing relevance of many identity-narratives which had been developed and reinterpreted since 1991. However, they also appeared to show the futility of attempts to shape a national cultural identity by excluding ambiguous elements (the result of previously unremarkable contact between the Yugoslav republics and of the different historical experiences of parts of Croatia itself) which had been classified as foreign during the political foregrounding of ethnicity. Interestingly, the overlap of cultural boundaries in Zagora/Herzegovina is paralleled by Slavonia/Vojvodina, where cultural markers (tamburica, sausages, wine, regional lexis) are also shared across an ethno-political boundary. 'Vojvodinan' nonetheless lacks the pejorative connotations of 'Herzegovinan', perhaps because Vojvodina shared its experience of Habsburg administration with most of Croatia and therefore qualifies for central-Europeanness, perhaps because of its autonomist political tradition which led Vojvodinan politicians to resist Milošević in 1987. The Croatian-Serbian media interaction over *Štikla* also suggests one could expand Rogers Brubaker's understanding of political nationalisms as interdependent fields (1996:68–75) to cover cultural spaces as well: cultural spaces too contain struggles to represent 'us' and 'them', reciprocal monitoring, reactions to the other field's representations and opportunities for particular actors to pursue private interests by putting forward particular representations.

Croatian unease towards folk, based on Croatia supposedly having a more 'western' character than the 'eastern' republics, nonetheless predated Tuđman's national ideology and had also been noticeable in Yugoslav entertainment (Rasmussen 2002). This identity-narrative may therefore have outlasted the 1990s because it resonated with longer-established expectations. 'Folk' is nonetheless polysemic: disapproval of it may be widespread, but the reasons for disapproval and the definition of the object of disapproval can be very different. Anti-folk narratives may stem from a preference for Croatian musical content over Bosnian/Serbian, an anti-populist investment in an aesthetic/archival approach to folk, or a performance of belonging to a taste-culture whose members tacitly recognise themselves through a shared exclusion of folk – to name but a few folk-rejecting discourses. Talking about the relatively novel phenomenon of folk, as Stef Jansen (2005a) suggested, is a means of talking about other socio-political developments and disappointments in newly independent Croatia. Indeed, the performance and restatement of that identity occurs (see Jenkins 1996) in the very act of talking about folk.

Yet the narrative of folk as incompatible with Croatianness does not appear (at least on the available evidence) to be shared by folk listeners themselves: note, for instance, the comments of the folk entrepreneur and Croatian volunteer Alen Borbaš (6.1.5). The apparent 'contradiction' of teenagers listening both to Bosnian/Serbian pop-folk with its connections to the 'Ottoman ecumene' (Buchanan ed. 2007) and to Thompson who narrates an ethno-historical Croatian community may not be a contradiction at all. Perhaps similarly, former Soviet Komsomol members interviewed by Andrei Yurchak inhabited a 'rich heteroglossia' (2006:221) when it came to reconciling ideological engagement and musical tastes: their belief in a broadly communist future did not preclude them listening to western rock and constructing a positively-valued 'imaginary west' (2006:34).

Listening to Thompson is hardly the same sort of activity as Komsomol membership (despite journalistic discourse likening Thompson concerts to extremist rallies): instead, the common thread is that neither set of listeners apparently experienced their activities as incompatible despite the potential ideological contradictions. There is thus little to suggest that transnational folk listening could contribute to conflict prevention by breaking down ethnic boundaries, as implied by an April 2006 *Washington Post* article on Serbian folk in Croatia, or even to suggest that folk listeners interpret their tastes as a political act. Folk matters in cultural politics because certain individuals/groups have an interest in establishing/restating the distinction for their own ends, leading to the media prominence of folk. However, these cultural-political struggles do not necessarily affect how people

experience music unless they lead to decisions which structure the range of opportunities for experiencing it.

6 *The nation in context*

Croatia's separation from the Yugoslav marketplace and media structure was an integral part of promoting independent nationhood and statehood: as Anthony Cohen (1985) suggests, constructing a community symbolically depends on both inclusion (e.g. symbols of Croatian nationhood) and exclusion (symbols of Yugoslavia/socialism/Serbdom). Symbolically legitimating Croatia's independence called for two simultaneous shifts in consciousness: replacing socialism with democracy as in other eastern European political transitions (e.g. Watson ed. 1994; Esbenshade 1995; Wanner 1998; Verdery 1999), and reducing the state's territorial borders. In practice, the new government's nationalist politics also required a third shift, towards viewing ethno-national belonging as the most important component of personal or cultural identity. The resultant Communist/Yugoslav/Serb 'others' were easily conflated when the Croatian national movement felt oppressed by the Communist apparatus of a Yugoslav state centred on Belgrade, where Slobodan Milošević used Serb nationalist rhetoric to exert power over rivals. Homeland War presidential discourse treated all three 'others' as identical and equally threatening, so demanded all three should be excluded from public space and the new national consciousness. Street-names, monuments, library shelves and the commemorative calendar were all cleansed or liberated of these three unwanted historical dimensions (Drakulić 1998; Ugrešić 1998; Ivančić 2000; Rihtman-Auguštin 2000; Bellamy 2003).

Ljerka Rasmussen (2007:61) posits a three-stage disintegration of Yugoslav popular music: musicians dividing 'along nationality lines', entertainment re-focusing inside 'republican borders' and a breakdown of connections between different republics' audiences. These processes fed on, and fed into, the reorientation of politics, business, literature and culture (see Dević 1998; Dragović-Soso 2002). Severance was well-advanced when Croatia declared independence (June 1991), but was further inflected by the changing course of the war. Stef Jansen (2002:82) has suggested a strategy of 'disambiguati[ng]' the past enabled his informants 'to understand a ruptured present'. Public figures, too, were called upon to disambiguate their own pasts and show that their suddenly inconvenient participation in Yugoslav culture/politics had always had Croatian interests at heart. The 'confiscation of memory', the title of a Dubravka Ugrešić essay (1998:217–35), was largely a confiscation of ambiguity. This climate later gave way to satisfying the commercial market

for newly-transnational music while still privileging the nation-state and national culture, although how far to admit these foreign cultural flows remained contentious.

This chapter explains how the Croatian state, the media and the recording industry depicted ethnicity as the most important aspect of identity. In so doing, it draws on explanations for the post-Yugoslav conflicts which emphasise contemporary attempts to prioritise ethnicity rather than longer-term ethnic divisions (although promoting ethnicity often invoked ethnicised interpretations of previous conflicts). VP Gagnon (2004:25) argues that wartime Croatian/Serbian nationalist elites used their powers to resolve tensions caused by ‘the non-congruence of social and political spaces’. Previous social experiences of producing and consuming Yugoslav popular music on a taken-for-granted trans-republican basis sat uneasily with the premise that a sovereign, independent state should have its own popular music expressing national culture. Detaching Croatia from Yugoslav music thus had both culturalist and strategic justifications. However, while the Homeland War was undoubtedly the most important event in the history of the current Croatian state, the war and secession were not themselves enough to set the parameters of contemporary Croatian life. To argue that a shared Yugoslav past persists in popular music has almost become a commonplace, yet Croatia is less frequently related to transnational cultural flows affecting music production/consumption throughout and beyond Europe.²⁰³ This chapter therefore also revisits ideas of ‘Europe’ and the ‘east’ in Croatian popular music, situating them among the global music market’s constraints and opportunities.

6.1 Post-Yugoslav cultural space: disintegration and reintegration

6.1.1 The breakdown of Yugoslav cultural space

Croatian showbusiness became detached from the Yugoslav framework when politics, business and media re-oriented towards Croatia rather than Yugoslavia after HDZ won Croatia’s first multi-party elections (April–May 1990). This entailed suspicion of any institutions from Belgrade (likely to be Milošević-controlled) or associated with the reformist federal president Ante Marković. Yugoslav television was ‘unsuitable’ on both counts: the Yugoslav broadcaster JRT (Yugoslav Radio-Television) was seen as a vehicle for Milošević’s propaganda, and Marković’s Yutel (launched in October 1990) gave undue prominence to the anti-independence argument while also contradicting the Croatian government’s position on the Croatian Serb rebellion (e.g. by voicing Serbs’ fears of an

²⁰³ Although see Piškor 2006.

ethnocentric constitution). By the turn of 1990/1991, HTV was under increasing political pressure to stop broadcasting Serb propaganda, and progressively withdrew other republics' programming (while also dismissing hundreds of staff for the sake of rationalisation) – starting with news and ending with sport (Turković 1990). JRT's collapse was a result of elites' competition for resources after the party-state disintegrated, and a means of gradually extracting republics from rival flows of political communication. The recording industry's separation was less public, but restructured the conditions for professional music-making in Croatia. Jugoton/Croatia Records mothballed its NCFM archive, while its leading Bosnian folk stars (Hari Varešanović, Halid Bešlić, Neda Ukraden) had already moved to Diskoton in Sarajevo in 1989–90 for ostensibly financial reasons.²⁰⁴ The state media's anti-NCFM campaign eliminated a vibrant market sector and aimed to reconstruct public cultural space for good. Meanwhile, media reports of certain personalities' insulting/nationalist anti-Croatian behaviour branded them as politically unacceptable and accelerated their exclusion from the new state's cultural space.

The Communist–Yugoslav–Serb conflation, expressed in the state-media neologism 'Serbo-Communist', led to a revision of memory aiming to uproot all three elements. Rejecting Communism extended to removing monuments to anti-fascism, and rejecting the Serbian language led to several libraries removing books written in Cyrillic or by Serbs from their collections (Ivančić 2000:67, 163–73). Croatian Serb personalities came under increasing pressure to declare their loyalty to the Croatian state and guarantee that Serbs were not endangered in Croatia, or face the type of concerted hostility directed against the actors Rade Šerbedžija and Mira Furlan. Hrvoje Hitrec, HTV's first director, viewed resistance to his changes as service to Yugoslavia and treachery against Croatia: he had been making 'Croatian coats-of-arms [and] church masses' visible, to the chagrin of 'all the Yugo-unitarists, traitors etc' who had made TV Zagreb a 'Yugo-colony' before his arrival (Ogresta 1992). Silence was no better than supporting Serbia and denying Croatia.

The symbolic reconstruction of the nation-state in the media was achieved as seamlessly as possible. The state-owned *Večernji list* drew little attention to dropped programmes or the anti-NCFM campaign, although the independent weekly *Globus*'s television supplement indicated many Serbian/Bosnian singers were no longer being broadcast (Pribić 1991a). Reporting on personalities' insulting or chauvinistic behaviour simultaneously helped break down the former common space of entertainment – as may have gone on in reverse when,

²⁰⁴ Diskoton's apparently-higher advances; Ukraden also mentioned the Milošević-controlled government's federal taxes on Croatian-produced goods (Pavlović 1990)

according to *Večernji list* (1991), anyone in Hrvatski Band Aid was apparently dropped from Serbian and Montenegrin television. Gagnon (2004:8) argues that the Croatian and Serbian elites both used media resources to complement their strategies of forcibly disintegrating social realities and framing the conflict as ethnic. If so, the state media's presentation of popular music supported the emphases of news and extended those strategies further into everyday social life.

6.1.2 The 'return' of Bosniaks

After the early 1990s' anti-NCFM campaign, the 1995–96 initiative to 'return' Bosnian folk music to Croatia represented the first official attempt to restore cultural flows between Croatia and another ex-Yugoslav region, and illustrated Bosniaks' ambiguous status in Croatian culture and public life. Although many Bosniaks fled to Croatia during the Bosnian war, the Croatian state media also turned a religious Muslim/Catholic opposition against Bosniaks during the Muslim–Croat conflict (Erjavec and Volčič 2007) – exacerbated by the 1993–94 Islamicisation of Bosnian politics (see Bougarel 2007). Bosnian folk music too occupied an uncertain position. Early-1990s anti-eastern discourses often caught up Serbian *and* Bosnian music, both having influenced Yugoslav NCFM (see Rasmussen 2002). However, the argument that Serbian music was offensive because Serbia had been the wartime aggressor was less applicable to Bosnian music, making it relatively more acceptable for performance, sale and broadcasting.

The media frequently discussed Bosniaks' return to concert activity in Zagreb as the 'return of narodnjaci' (NCFM songs/singers). However, simply talking about 'narodnjaci' failed to distinguish between groups who experienced different treatment: Bosniaks who had stayed in Sarajevo during the war; Bosniaks who had moved to Zagreb; or Belgrade; or emigrated altogether; Bosnian Serbs; and Serbian Serbs. Ethnicity and war record both affected (un)suitability. 'Sarajevans' who had supported the Bosniak party SDA during the war in Bosnia experienced the least problems (and may have benefited from party patronage²⁰⁵), followed by 'émigré' Bosniaks whose activities had been uncontroversial. However, Hari Varešanović, a Sarajevan Bosniak, allegedly called Croats 'Ustašas' at Belgrade's Mesam festival, and spent some time in Belgrade during the war before moving to Scandinavia. His attempts to resume a Croatian career in 1997 fell through, and he only fully 'returned' in 2002 at the Hrvatski radijski festival – more like the 'returns' of Zdravko Čolić, Đorđe Balašević and Bajaga (all much more closely associated with Serbia) than

²⁰⁵ Hanka Paldum used to be married to a leading SDA politician, Haris Silajdžić.

those of other Sarajevans. His first solo arena concert in Zagreb since the war took place in March 2008.

Globus had predicted soon after the Washington Agreements (which ended the Bosnian Muslim–Croat conflict) that the rapprochement would bring Bosniak folk singers to Croatia (Garmaz 1994c) – suggesting it was commonsense to assume political change would cause musical change. Bosnian folk’s underground ‘cassette culture’ (see Manuel 1993) in Croatia (Garmaz 1994a) thus gained visibility. The first public ‘returns’ (September 1994) were by Šerif Konjević and Halid Bešlić, during a fundraising concert for orphans of Croatian/Bosnian soldiers. Konjević and Halid Muslimović held solo concerts in 1995, and one by Hanka Paldum and Meho Puzić followed in 1996, sponsored by the Bosnian embassy (Slunjski 1996). Konjević’s ‘comeback’ interview, implicitly and explicitly separating Serbian singers from his own cultural space, indicated how Bosniak performers negotiated the early-1990s discursive climate by emphasising how Bosnian music different from Serbian culture.²⁰⁶ This masked the Yugoslav musical mixing of Bosnian and Serbian influences, and reflected 1990s Bosnian cultural politics which constructed certain musical forms as symbols of Muslim, Croat or Serb ethnicity (see Laušević 2000). Paldum had been upset when a 1996 *Latinica* had ‘called sevdalinka eastern [istočnjačkom] music’ because that misrepresented its nature as ‘a city song from the urban centre’ about female emotions (Slunjski 1996). In 1999, while negotiating a Croatia Records contract, she again stressed her music was not ‘Serbian folk but Bosnian [bosanska] music which is only about love’, and that sevdalinka was rooted ‘in the aristocracy’ and listened to in ‘urban, bourgeois [građanskim], circles’ rather than having rural origins (Hazonadar 1999). Paldum also narrated her suitability to perform in Croatia by referring to political criteria from the Bosnian war. Like Konjević, she was frequently quoted attacking cultural figures who had left Sarajevo for Belgrade.

The labelling of music, instruments, or vocal styles as ‘eastern’, ‘Serbian’, or sometimes (in the early 1990s) ‘Greek’ (a discursive frame carried over from 1980s music criticism), was commonly used to excluding them from the field of Croatian cultural identity. *Večernji list*’s January 1994 interview (during the Muslim–Croat conflict) with Željko Bebek, a Bosnian Croat, was the only time it called music ‘Islamic’ in the 1990s: *VL* asked Bebek why his new record contained no songs ‘with Islamic [islamskim] overtones’ (Oremović

²⁰⁶ Konjević referred to his own pre-war political engagement (opposing ‘Četnik’ Serbian singers), his more sophisticated consumption habits compared to ‘Belgrade peasants’, a concentration-camp commander killing his brother, and being ‘aware Serbs listen to my songs too, but for me they no longer exist’ (Cigoj 1994b).

1994). Croatian music criticism rarely used this adjective, although it was more common in Serbian discourses about folk music (Gordy 1999:152–3). *Arena*, *Globus* and even *Slobodni tjednik* did not use it for music at all – yet it appeared in the state tabloid while Croatian governmental rhetoric was denouncing Bosniak leaders' religious fanaticism (see Uzelac 1998:467). In October 1992, *V/L* had represented Bebek rather differently by describing Serb attacks on Sarajevo and mentioning his fundraising concerts in Zagreb '[as] if for him the war began with the Četnik attack on eastern Slavonia' (Ševčik 1992) – positing Serbian aggression as causing both wars. The contrast suggests that even the state tabloid's presentation of showbusiness reporting responded to the state's wartime involvement and alliances.

Interestingly, Croatian journalists interviewed by Karmen Erjavec and Zala Volčič (2007:14–16) in 2006 recontextualised post-9/11 global anti-terrorist and anti-Islamic discourse to justify their opinions of the Muslim–Croat conflict, evoking the image of Croatia defending the west against the Muslim east – which helped to homogenise both the in-group (Croatians/Europeans) and the out-group (Bosniaks/Muslims). One journalist offered the fact that Bosniaks preferred 'Arab-sounding music' to 'western music' (Erjavec and Volčič 2007:16) as an indicator of their cultural distance. Ivo Žanić (2007:201) argues that one aspect of media symbolism during the Muslim–Croat conflict (evocations of Croat hajduks fighting Muslim/Ottoman governors) '[n]aturally' waned afterwards. Erjavec and Volčič's findings suggest that Europe/Islam constructions have taken longer to dissipate.

The political east's flexibility was nonetheless indicated by the rehabilitation of *sevdah*, which entailed its detachment from the fundamental 'other' of Serbia and the backward Balkans. That said, *V/L* still ignored Bosniak folk musicians after peace in Bosnia – e.g. by not mentioning Halid Muslimović's first post-war Zagreb concert, which *Arena* proclaimed 'the first newly-composed folk music spectacle in Croatia since 1990' amid several quotes from audience-members stating that ordinary people had never stopped listening to folk (Španović 1995).²⁰⁷ Muslimović's concert was also remembered for the number of police officers demanding concert-goers' papers, reportedly sweeping up illegal immigrants from Bosnia (Stjepandić 1997a). The action had strong pragmatic grounds, given the likely attendance of many Bosnian immigrants, but could also be seen as symbolically significant. Bosnian folk's 'return' had only occurred after Croatian cultural space was detached from Yugoslavia and national cultural identity was re-established on the state's terms. The

²⁰⁷ Cf. their different attitudes to HRT's 1993 anti-narodnjaci campaign (3.1.3).

police, as state agents, embodied the state's claim to the ultimate say in determining how far 'Yugoslav' culture could enter Croatia.

For several (male) Bosniak pop singers, the first step into Croatia was duetting with a (female) Croatian. Dino Merlin's collaboration with Ivana Banfić was voted the hit single of 2000 at the Croatian Porin awards, but there was unease over whether it actually qualified as 'Croatian' (Rasmussen 2007:83) – leading to a rule-change restricting awards to Croatian citizens. Duets followed between Banfić and Hari Varešanović, Danijela Martinović and Kemal Monteno, and Merlin and Nina Badrić.²⁰⁸ These arguably insulated Bosniak singers from protectionist resentment in Croatia, avoiding whatever had dogged the unsuccessful relaunch of Sarajevo's Plavi Orkestar (Čulić 2000). In industry terms, Bosniaks' domesticity/foreignness depends on whether they have a Croatian record label: thus Paldum and Bešlić, among the more respected Bosniak folk-singers, were classified as domestic after Hit Records signed them in 2007. Bešlić even became the first NCFM singer to hold a Croatian hall/stadium concert since the immediate post-war period by playing Cibona in May 2008 (Basara 2008).

6.1.3 The Croatian Musicians' Union

Throughout the 1990s, the Croatian Musicians' Union (HGU) represented an institutional obstacle to officially re-establishing cultural flows between Croatia and other ex-Yugoslav republics. HGU's remit (like other countries' musicians'/actors' unions) was to defend Croatian musicians' status (particularly airplay access) and protect them against foreign competition. A predecessor organisation was founded in September 1992 by a group of musicians and executives including Branko Paić, who promised it would 'fight for media space' and 'try to create space for Croatian production'. However, he also signalled it would pay particular attention to politically-unsuitable ex-Yugoslav musicians performing in Croatia: the union should fight so that 'a Hari Mata Hari [Varešanović] or Riblja Čorba' (whose frontman Bora Đorđević had declared himself a Četnik) 'cannot play in a single Croatian club for at least ten years' lest the union blacklist the venue (Šćepanović 1992).

HGU policy was strictest against musicians from Serbia, regardless of their musical affiliations, political background or 'rock' or 'folk' positioning. While the war lasted, HGU's leader Paolo Sfeci believed members should not co-operate with 'a country with which Croatia's at war' (Đilas 1995) and stated any Serbian musician might have been implicated in aggression against Croatia. His statement to *Feral* that 'nobody can guarantee

²⁰⁸ The next wave was Bosnian–Serbian duets (Pettan 2007:378–9).

some of those musicians weren't mobilised and might have been shooting around Vukovar' (Đilas 1995) became infamous; Majke's Goran Bare later challenged it because he thought the Serbian bands Partibrejkers and Električki Orgazam would never have gone to war (Birtić 1996b). Sfeci's main post-war criteria for 'normalising relations' became Croatians' ability to freely and safely perform in eastern Slavonia and Vukovar (UN-administered until 1998) and whether Serbia (the responsible party) had shown 'goodwill' first (Lesinger 1995b). HGU was assiduous enough to report Lepa Brena to employment inspectors when she visited Zagreb privately in 1998 and was photographed getting up on stage with a restaurant's house band (Jelinić 1998). By this point *Feral* was convinced Sfeci was ideologically opposed to any Serbian music, and insinuated that Croatian showbusiness resisted liberalisation for fear of competition from acts like Brena (Gall 1998c). Sfeci's statement about Bosnian bands playing 'Serbian narodnjaci' at Županja's anniversary celebration – 'we need to put an end to the influences which were imposed on us for fifty years' (Đilas 1995) – certainly seemed ideologically coherent with the period's anti-Yugoslav cultural politics (3.1.2).

More controversially, HGU also punished Croatian musicians who performed with Serbians, even if it had happened abroad. The cooperation site was often Slovenia, where Serbian musicians customarily performed for Slovenian/Croatian fans. The rock bands Kojoti, KUD Idijoti and The Stuff were all affected by temporary bans (Kolovrat 1996), while HGU banned another, Veliki Bijeli Slon, for three years after they performed Ekaterina Velika songs at a book-launch (Meniga and Krpan 1996).²⁰⁹ The anti-war credentials of Partibrejkers, Električni Orgazam and EKV – who famously came together as a protest band in 1992 (Gordy 1999:119) – apparently did not outweigh their connection to the Serbian state. The risk of HGU disapproval also affected better-established Croatian bands. Majke's manager, Tomislav Petrović, decided they should not appear at a joint concert in Ljubljana by several ex-Yugoslav bands because its slogan was 'All Yugoslavia is dancing rock-and-roll' (a well-known Orgazam song) – even though he was happy for Majke, Orgazam and Partibrejkers to perform together under other circumstances (Birtić 1998a).²¹⁰

Sfeci received most opprobrium after an April 1996 incident when the Sarajevo band Zabranjeno Pušenje were attacked by audience-members at The Best in Zagreb while performing a Macedonian folk song, *Fato mori dušmanke* (Đilas 1996b). *Novi list* reported

²⁰⁹ They were apparently trying to commemorate EKV's late vocalist (Krpan and Bašić 1996).

²¹⁰ The Croatian punk band KUD Idijoti and their management had no such reservations (Birtić 1998b).

(and the police denied) that the attackers had actually been anti-terrorist police officers (Perić 1996). Sfeci notoriously appeared to side with the attackers rather than the band in telling *Globus* that '[t]he Zagreb audience attacking "Zabranjeno pušenje" just showed the eastern melos has no place in Croatia' (Ivančić 1996).²¹¹ He later said he had meant it was obviously not yet safe to hold such concerts, and added HGU could have used legal means (immigration law) to prevent the concert had it actually wanted to (Sfeci 1996).

The 1996 agreement to normalise Croatian–Serbian diplomatic relations removed formal barriers to musical exchange (Maksimović 1996b), but informal discouragement of broadcasting or selling Serbian music remained possible – and largely undocumented. The 1996–98 struggle for ownership of Croatia Records between Miroslav Lilić and the art historian Ante Glibota included Glibota accusing Lilić of perfidiously trading with Serbs by licensing CR's back-catalogue to a Serbian label. Glibota supported his accusation with a common discursive reference to wartime suffering: '[m]emories of the horror [strave] are still part of our everyday life. It's hard to forget everything we saw, heard, experienced, [and] lost' (Pašić). Lilić argued that Croatia and Serbia had already recognised each other when the contract was signed (November 1996), and that 'sooner or later Croatia would have to do business with Serb Yugoslavia' (Zlatar 1997b). Even though Lilić declared strict politico-linguistic criteria for releasing music from Serbia (6.2.1), he was still more pragmatic than (for instance) Juraj Hrvaić, who did not want his radio stations 'experiment[ing]' with it (Krile 1997). The late 1990s saw tentative initiatives to re-establish cultural contacts in publishing and film as well as music (Fisher 2006:108). However, cultural co-operation initiatives were strengthened after 2000 by political change in Serbia and Croatia.

6.1.4 Political change and Croatian–Serbian relations²¹²

The most significant newly-transnational musical flow at the turn of the decade involved Serbia/Montenegro (then FRJ) and Croatia. Between 1998 and 2004, performance in the other country (rather than the middle ground of Slovenia) and legitimately-distributed recordings began to replace the indirect, often illegal practices which had been sustaining Croatian–Serbian cultural flows. However, the re-establishment of relationships was structured by political criteria. Musicians who had directly participated in nationalist politics were generally unwelcome in the other country, and themselves often considered it

²¹¹ The club's owner Mirko Kramarić also sided with 'the audience' and accused ZP of provocation. He added the DJ had restored order by playing Prljavo Kazalište (Birtić 1996b).

²¹² Further discussed in Baker 2006b.

immoral to perform there. Here one must account for the constraining or facilitating role of the state: Martin Cloonan (1999:197) argues that live performance is where states are most able to control musical inflows, since immigration and customs policy applies. Incorporating state power helps deal with Hastings Donnan and Thomas Wilson's criticism (1999:24–6) of an anthropology which concentrates on symbolic borders while neglecting the state's physical ones.

The first FRJ musician to perform in Croatia was Rambo Amadeus, at a 1998 celebration of the UN Declaration on Human Rights in Pula (Kolovrat 2000). It took two further years for FRJ musicians to perform in Zagreb, when he and Električki Orgazam performed in 2000 at the newly-opened club Tvornica – where private funding perhaps gave programmers more leeway. The first Croatian performances in FRJ occurred in late 1999, when Alka Vuica and Dino Dvornik appeared at New Year's celebrations in Belgrade and (most controversially) Doris Dragović appeared at one in Igal (Montenegro) alongside Varešanović, Haris Džinović and Maja Nikolić (a multi-ethnic line-up). Dragović's literal and metaphorical transgression was not mitigated because a Croat priest, Branko Sbutega, had invited her. Indeed, it was exacerbated by her record of maternally-patriotic wartime songs and her continued support of HDZ: *Globus* (1999) commented acerbically that she had been in the honour-guard at Tuđman's recent funeral. Vuica and Dragović justified their FRJ performances differently. Vuica (1999) alluded to 'hypocrisy' in criticising musicians for working in Serbia when there were sport and business links already. Dragović also mentioned trade, but placed much more emphasis on the priest's invitation and referred to her charity work for veterans and their orphans (Cigoj 2000a) – the photos for this interview included her looking at Croatian baroque paintings in a Montenegrin church.

Tuđman's death and the centre-left election victories (in Croatia) and Milošević's fall (in Serbia) altered the context of cross-border performance because Croatians' performing in FRJ would no longer look like supporting Milošević. Long-running speculation that Tonči Huljić's clients would be the first to extend into Serbia were accelerated by the Dragović case and materialised in 2001 when Huljić's group Magazin first toured FRJ.²¹³ However, the pop singers' 'returns' were much more newsworthy than early Serbian performances in 2000 by Darko Rundek and KUD Idijoti, who as rock musicians were less susceptible to mass-media disapproval (Baker 2006b:277). Croatian pop performers' reception into

²¹³ Nearly all Huljić's singers were associated with Split – recalling Jansen's suggestion (2005a:229) that 'the Dalmatian coast was one of the main points of a common Yugoslav cultural space' since families from all over Yugoslavia holidayed there.

Serbian showbusiness was greatly facilitated by Željko Mitrović (owner of TV Pink and City Records):²¹⁴ City acquired many Croatian releases on licence, and TV Pink added Croatian categories to its awards (giving Croatians Serbian television exposure). In Croatia, opposition to Croatians performing in Serbia usually used a war-memory discourse: Mišo Kovač considered it would be ‘treachery’ to go there ‘[u]ntil the main aggressors apologise in all segments’ (Kruhak 2001a) and Thompson argued ‘[s]o many young people died and spilled their blood that they [singers] don’t have the right to do it’ (Kruhak 2001c). Boris Novković faced hostility in Vukovar after he performed in Serbia in 2005 on the anniversary of Vukovar’s fall (*Večernji list* 2005). In Serbia, Croatians were less controversial, although (when a Serbian basketball player had just been refused entry to Croatia with a Četnik tattoo²¹⁵) the Serbian patriotic singer Lepi Mića complained about ‘musical genocide’ being perpetrated because Croatian music got so much Serbian airplay (*Kurir* 2006b).

Croatia’s change of government also affected conditions for foreign performers inside Croatia. In 2000, all foreign musicians required visas and work-permits, although evasion was common: Halid Muslimović was banned from Croatia for three months after being caught performing without a work-permit in Novska, so moved the remaining dates to the Slovenian border (Paleka 2000). The relevant professional association (HGU for music) had to certify applicants as suitable to the culture ministry before any permits were issued. Approval seems also to have included an investigation into Serbian performers’ political background: when Homeland War veterans complained about Miroslav Ilić playing in Našice, his manager for Croatia replied police had verified Ilić had never belonged to the Serbian Radical Party (*Novi list* 2002). However, SDP’s culture minister Antun Vujić indicated a more hands-off attitude to Serbian performances in Croatia: he did not see it as threatening domestic musicians ‘[if] someone from Serbia performs for 2–3 days’, and did not think it was his job ‘to evaluate Rambo Amadeus, Partibrejkers, Električki Orgazam or Lepa Brena’ (Dragojević 2000). Regulations were quietly relaxed in 2002 letting musicians work for up to 30 days in Croatia without a permit (Gatarić and Vuković 2002), making it less complicated to book them.

²¹⁴ Mitrović has not yet bought into Croatian music or media. When he attempted to buy CR in 2004, *Nacional* ran an article predicting his businesses would force ‘Serbian narodnjaci and semi-entertainers’ into Croatian airspace (Sinovčić 2004), and Miroslav Škoro called a shareholders’ meeting to prevent the deal (*Nacional* 2004b).

²¹⁵ See Sindbaek 2007.

6.1.5 Folk and the media

Serbian 'returns' followed different patterns for musicians associated with rock or folk. Rock musicians played in large arenas, prestigious clubs or festivals, as they had done in Croatia during the Yugoslav era, but folk singers, however, played in small-town or outlying nightclubs, although in Yugoslav Croatia the most successful (e.g. Brena) held arena concerts too.²¹⁶ By 2007, Partibrejkers' headlining a festival at Jarun passed practically unnoticed – while a folk concert by Bosnian and Serbian singers in Zagreb proved to be one of the most controversial musical events of the year. Folk's differential treatment of folk can partly be attributed to its significance as a cultural boundary separating Croatia from its east, but sometimes political or business rivalry may have had an effect too – as when Alen Borbaš and Anto Đapić (HSP leader and Osijek's then mayor) fell out over hiring the municipal sports-hall for Borbaš's folk awards (2004 onwards), which attracted Bosnian and Serbian pop-folk singers.²¹⁷ What would have been post-Yugoslav Croatia's largest folk concert yet, the Folk revija at Zagrebački velesajam involving over a dozen Bosnian/Serbian pop-folk singers, collapsed in unclear circumstances in February 2007 after protests by a Croatian veterans' group. The organiser, BN Televizija from Republika Srpska, blamed the cancellation on threats, although the veterans' president Damir Jašarević argued the advertisement had been a deliberate scam (*Večernji list* 2007b).

The concert was (perhaps significantly) cancelled a day after being discussed on Hloverka Novak-Srzić's Nova TV talk-show.²¹⁸ Her guests included Jašarević, who argued a municipally-owned venue should not host the concert, Paolo Sfeci, who pointed out folk singers' frequent immigration offences, and Drago Rubala, who presented (Croatian) folk-music shows on Narodni radio. Jašarević and Sfeci also alluded to Serbian folk's politically-offensive connotations: Jašarević retold the story of Serb soldiers playing Nada Topčagić songs from loudspeakers when Vukovar fell,²¹⁹ and Sfeci too mentioned 'we' had been attacked with that music. Although Alen Borbaš also appeared to speak for folk, he was

²¹⁶ Two exceptions were Željko Joksimović (some months after Croatians unexpectedly gave him maximum points at Eurovision), whom the Croatian press classified as 'folk' (Marušić 2004) even though he counted as a 'zabavni' singer in Serbia. Indira Radić, a folk singer with a western-style band, also performed at the Dom sportova in early 2005.

²¹⁷ In 2008, when Đapić was no longer mayor, the awards did happen at the council hall.

²¹⁸ *Jutarnji list* (2007) congratulated her for getting it cancelled.

²¹⁹ In 1992 Globus accused Topčagić of performing in occupied Vukovar (Torbarina 1992).

rarely questioned and received far less opportunity to speak than on a December 2006 *Latinica*, also about ‘narodnjaci’ in Croatia.²²⁰

Novak-Srzić frequently called the concert ‘Turbo folk revija’ not ‘Folk revija’ (its advertised name), recycling the symbolic distancing-strategy which uses the originally-Serbian idea of ‘turbofolk’ to place music beyond the boundaries of Croatian identity. Folk listeners/performers usually say ‘folk’, not ‘turbofolk’. An exchange between Novak-Srzić and Borbaš about Mile Kitić’s song *Šampanjac* (*Champagne*) exemplified the strategy:

AB: [...] folk hit of the year in Croatia.

HNS: It’s called turbofolk?

AB: It’s called folk.

Novak-Srzić nonetheless continued to say ‘turbofolk’ not ‘folk’ throughout. John Hutnyk (2000:56) argues banned videos/music can nonetheless be shown in ‘institutionally condoned spaces’ like talk-shows if they are contextualised with an authority-figure’s editorial comment. *Kontakt* extended its framing to a video extract from *Šampanjac*, surrounded by a red frame with the show’s logo – preventing channel-surfers from thinking Nova TV was broadcasting it at face-value.

Although this was an example of cultural boundaries being reinforced through television, talk-shows have also increased folk personalities’ visibility in Croatia. As with record-releases and live performances, there were several false starts: Lepa Brena and Neda Ukraden both had HTV talk-show appearances cancelled (in 1998 and 2000) before appearing on Alka Vuica’s Nova show *Jedan na jedan* in 2005. However, talk-shows too were subject to certain political constraints: Petar Vlahov’s January 2005 interview with Ceca Ražnatović treated her as a showbusiness personality and avoided issues of war guilt or responsibility, caused many complaints and never aired. Bora Đorđević, however, was treated as a (hostile) political actor, not a musician, when Mirjana Hrga interviewed him about the Serbian elections on Nova in January 2007.²²¹ Perhaps a male rocker ‘deserved’ to be taken more seriously; perhaps Vlahov’s experience clarified the acceptable ‘uses’ of controversial Serbian personalities on Nova.

6.1.6 ‘Yugo-nostalgia’

Bijelo Dugme’s June 2005 reunion at stadia in Sarajevo, Zagreb and Belgrade was post-Yugoslav Croatia’s most spectacular ex-Yugoslav musical event yet. In Croatia, the tour’s

²²⁰ *Latinica* conversely gave Borbaš eight minutes to talk about his war record, Croatian soldiers listening to Serbian folk and folk’s appeal today.

²²¹ Hrga also interviewed a Serbian human-rights activist as a representative of ‘another Serbia which is much more acceptable to us’: this segment lasted 10 minutes, as opposed to Đorđević’s 25+.

reception largely centred on the 'Yugo-nostalgia' Dugme was thought to embody: the right-wing columnist Milan Jajčinović (2005) saw it as an attempted renewal of 'Titoslavia', while Darko Hudelist (2005a) criticised the commodification of nostalgia suggested by Coca-Cola's sponsorship of it. 'Yugo-rock', which Dugme personified, has remained a key symbol of belonging to the ex-Yugoslav community: Dugme and the 1980s new-wave scene were arguably 'seen as the cultural links between different nations,' and practices such as travelling to concerts provided lived experience of ex-Yugoslavia as a common state (Volčič 2007a:78–9). The band-members comprised several nationalities and their home republic, Bosnia-Herzegovina, was often seen as a microcosm of Yugoslav demographics. In the 1990s, by contrast, travelling (or not travelling) to concerts provided lived experience of the common state's breakdown. Many bands (including Dugme) had split during the state's disintegration and the outbreak of war, and others were physically and politically unable to perform in certain states. In 1994–95 Lepa Brena, Rambo Amadeus and Đorđe Balašević inaugurated the substitute practice of Serbian bands performing in Slovenia, often in locations near the Croatian border. Balašević's Slovenian concerts also attracted fans from Serbia, who travelled through Hungary to see him after he promised not to perform in Serbia while Milošević was in power. Serbian musicians' increased opportunities for Croatian performances have made the Slovenian option less important (for Croatians), except perhaps for Ceca Ražnatović concerts or Folk revija, which eventually happened in Ljubljana.

Listening to ex-Yugoslav music and attending ex-Yugoslav musicians' concerts could be seen as resistance to the 1990s' nationalising cultural policy, as Stef Jansen (2005a) implies by focusing on the Serbian singer-songwriter Đorđe Balašević as a positive 'anti-nationalist' symbol.²²² This role suited Balašević for several reasons (Jansen 2005a:251): his open criticism of the war/Milošević, his evading Serbian conscription, his antipathy to populist 'primitivism', his songs commemorating Tito, his ethnically-mixed family, and perhaps even his geo-cultural origin in Vojvodina, the formerly Habsburg part of Serbia – all complicating Croatian nationalists' desired image of the Serbian other. Balašević regularly narrated all this to Croatian magazines (often before/after Slovenian concerts), articulating his membership of a favourable cultural context – coming from the Danubian city of Novi Sad (the Habsburg side of the Austrian/Ottoman border) he 'want[ed] to belong to Central Europe' and pointed out many more people wanted to bring Serbia 'back where it emerged

²²² Indeed, Balašević is integral enough to Jansen's *own* narrative that his introduction begins with a Balašević song about the nineties (2005a:11).

and wants to belong – Europe’ (Klemenčič 1993; also at Jansen 2005a:137). He once told *Feral* he had never performed in Herzegovina ‘because that sensibility is simply not compatible with mine’ (Đilas 1994); elsewhere he discussed his unease about ‘peasant’ refugees taking over Novi Sad (Đilas 1997) and his sales having been greatest ‘in Austro-Hungarian cities, from Subotica [Serbia] to Maribor [Slovenia]’ (Birtič 1996a).

Rumours Balašević would become the first Serbian to perform in post-Yugoslav Croatia persisted throughout the 1990s, especially once Croatia Records shops began to sell tickets to his Ljubljana concerts in 1995. It is unclear whether HGU actually intervened to delay his return as Balašević once suspected (Matković 1997); HGU’s official line was that Balašević should not perform in Croatia until Prljavo Kazalište could perform in Vukovar and Belgrade (Ivančić 1996). Balašević’s appointment as a UNHCR goodwill-ambassador in 1998 was praised by *Feral*, but opposed by HGU because ‘he comes from [an/the] aggressor country’ (Gall 1998a). Jansen (2005a:253) argues that attending Balašević concerts let young people experience ‘an imaginary Yugoslav origin’ and an ‘emotional continuity with a past which was *not* theirs and which is “forbidden”’. The same might have been said for Azra, only their concerts did not exist.

The sociologist Josip Županov (1996) once identified five forms of longing for Yugoslavia (‘Yugo-nostalgia’) in Croatia – ‘old Croatian’, ‘Greater Serbian’, ‘Partisan’, ‘supranational’ and ‘rock-related’. Celebrating shared Yugoslav culture and everyday life did not necessarily entail political aspirations to reorganise the state, although it did implicitly challenge the 1990s presidential narrative that the Yugoslav experience had been universally negative. Moreover, it often undermined the drive for political and cultural separation by maintaining links with other parts of the so-called ‘former state’. Media framing of the return of Bosnian/Serbian musicians as ‘Yugo-nostalgia’ therefore gave the cultural flows political connotations, and in the mid-1990s climate could even imply their listeners were dangerous political revisionists.

Yugo-nostalgia has more recently been broken down by Zala Volčič (2007b:28) into political revisionism, aesthetic nostalgia (preserving the past), and the ‘commercial phenomenon’ of ‘[e]scapist, utopian nostalgia’ based on ‘commodified symbols of Yugoslav identity’ like popular music. Indeed, Volčič (2007b:33) considers Dugme’s reunion a prime example of this last form, and raises the ‘paradox’ that the Yugo-rock spirit actually entailed ‘a culture of resistance to Yugoslav socialism’ despite the regime generally tolerating it. Another striking example of utopian/kitsch nostalgia was the Macedonian singer Tijana Dapčević’s satirical song about Tito, *Sve je isto samo njega nema* (*It’s*

all the same except he's not here, 2005), which referenced Dugme's reunion. The song included six verses, one in each Yugoslav state's language/dialect, with appropriate musical arrangements and references to national stereotypes (e.g. Montenegrin laziness) (Mikić 2006).²²³ The verse about Croatia mocked Croats' pretensions to Europeaness despite their secret love of pop-folk, and Dapčević dressed as Severina for the Croatian section of the video.

Recent anthropologists have debated how to approach nostalgia: Jansen (2005a:254) treats it as a discursive practice through which individuals maintain a meaningful context for their personal memories, while Volčič's critical attitude to nostalgia (2007b:25–6) sympathises with postmodernists' argument that nostalgia produces spectacle out of history. One should certainly watch out for commodification, but the commercialisation of 'Yugo-nostalgia' should not automatically disparage musicians' or listeners' attempts to find positive aspects of the Yugoslav past. One example is the work of the Tuzla-born, Zagreb-based rapper Edo Maajka, who now complements Balašević in anti-folk 'anti-nationalist' symbolism. Like Balašević, Maajka attacks folk and its mentality (adding a hip-hop critique of 'selling out'). Jurica Pavičić (2007), for one, included Maajka among cultural symbols of Croatia's 'new bourgeoisie' which enjoys Šaban Bajramović and Asian culture but dislikes Jelena Karleuša (a Serbian pop-folk singer) and 'Split showbusiness'. The Sarajevan rock musician Dino Šaran argued Maajka, Darko Rundek and himself all thought similarly and resisted 'turbo-folk' (Lasić 2006b).

The presentation of Maajka's 2006 album *Stig'o ćumur* drew on the memory of ex-Yugoslavia, using mining iconography (important in the socialist cult of industry) and artwork including young miners from Breza (Bosnia-Herzegovina) striking hip-hop poses and himself giving a Partisan salute.²²⁴ Familiar symbols, codified through nostalgic practices, are thus used to contrast wartime profiteering and rapid enrichment to 'the real human values and dignity' (Edo Maajka 2006) of industrial work. His stylised Pioneer costumed on the cover of his 2008 album *Balkansko a naše* (*Balkan and/ but ours*) even more explicitly reinscribed the memory of socialist Yugoslavia into his personal narrative – and the collective narratives he could belong to.

²²³ Yet perhaps also structured around another, silent presence – the Roma violinist in the middle eight.

²²⁴ In Yugoslavia his native Tuzla was known for a spirit of 'workers' resistance and socialist solidarity', and Bosnia's highest proportion of self-declared 'Yugoslavs' (Jansen 2007:196–7).

6.2 Music, memory and ambiguity

6.2.1 Language

The instrumentalisation of language as a marker of ethnic identity in the ex-Yugoslav states has often been noted (Wachtel 1998; Bellamy 2003; Bugarski 2004; Dragojević 2005; Greenberg 2005). In ex-Yugoslavia, supporting a common ‘Serbo-Croatian’ language or separate Serbian/Croatian languages implied political standpoints for/against Yugoslav unitarism. During Croatia’s separation, the Croatian language and ‘latinica’ (Latin script) were elevated into constitutionally-recognised statehood symbols, while the Serbian language and ‘ćirilica’ (Cyrillic script) were set beyond the national boundary as part of the general breakdown of Yugoslav cultural space (Hayden 1992:657). The convergence of linguistic politics with popular music illustrates how the campaign against ethno-national ambiguity made language a central tool of disambiguation. The discursive impossibility of belonging to both ‘Croatian’ and ‘Serbian’ culture was thrown into crisis by the overlap of cultural spaces and Yugoslav-era cultural contacts, but resolved by the telltale vowel which unambiguously classified music/speech as Serbian (in ekavica) or Croatian (in literary-standard ijekavica, or the ikavica spoken in Dalmatia, Zagora and Herzegovina). The linguistic boundary’s relative unambiguousness made it a firm criterion for differentiation.²²⁵

The disintegration of the Yugoslav television framework had frequently involved linguistic pretexts for not showing Serbian programming in Croatia. A 1990–91 *Večernji list* letters-page progressively narrowed its linguistic criteria: initially Cyrillic subtitles and in-vision text were a problem (Vukelić and Šabarić 1991b), but after HTV stopped broadcasting them the complaints shifted to vocabulary instead. The column even printed dictionaries, apparently compiled by readers, of lexical differences between Croatian and Serbian (Šabarić 1990b; Vukelić and Šabarić 1990, 1991c). Other viewers complained about Yutel’s (Croatian) director Goran Milić not using his ‘mother-tongue’ on screen (Šabarić and Vukelić 1991). These debates must be seen in the context of the official linguistic trend towards medievalisms and neologisms not used in Serbian, and of a more negative corollary of the separation policy – that privileging the Croatian language could be interpreted as rejecting Serbian.

²²⁵ ‘Relative’ unambiguousness because Croats from eastern Sr(ij)em in Serbia spoke ekavica – and sometimes found their ethnicity questioned after moving to Croatia as refugees (Čapo Žmegač 2007:21). Language was therefore *made* an ethnic marker, and was not a totally natural link (Carmichael 2002:113).

Croatian showbusiness had never previously used ekavica, so popular music's linguistic boundary did not require monitoring the way that 'eastern' folk elements had. The tacit removal of songs in ekavica from radio archives took care of offending Yugoslav-era material. Critics or journalists nonetheless pointed out potential new transgressions, such a 1995 song by Alka Vuica being titled *Laži me* not *Laži mi* (*Lie to me* – Serbian took an accusative, Croatian a dative). Vuica responded that the accusative had been allowed in the old Croatian grammar replaced in 1991, and told several stories of her 'real, Croatian family which fought for our language' in Umag (Stojsavljević 1995) – implicitly claiming stronger Croatian credentials than her critics. Zdravko Šljivac, a tamburica composer, once complained about 'da' phrases not infinitives being used in music from Split, 'and we know well who brought it and how they poisoned the inhabitants with that speech' – apparently JNA officers (Goles 1998). The mid-1990s reopening of folk clubs in Zagreb saw uncertainty as to what music was actually suitable: songs by Serbians could be performed but always ended up in Croatian/ijekavica (3.2.4). The nightclub singer Dragica Brkić said bosses had told her that 'the main thing is not to sing in ekavica, so as not to shred [people's] ears' (Birtić and Pleše 1996). Language was also the disambiguating factor for the Vukovar veteran who owned a folk club in Đakovačka Satnica. He told *Arena* that many of his comrades had 'also sung those songs in the trenches, while those to whom they belong in their ekavica performance were killing us' (Miličević 1998). Another *Arena* report left simply no room for debate about translation. The journalist described how 'today in the centre of the Croatian metropolis the frisky sounds of narodnjaci can be heard, of course – in an "ijekavica" version' (Šimunović 1998b).²²⁶

Ekavica's exclusion represented a fundamental obstacle to tentative 1995–98 moves to begin selling Serbian records in Croatia. The CR director Miroslav Lilić gave several interviews about what would make Serbian musicians acceptable in Croatia. Politically, they needed not just to have protested the war but also 'to admit Serbia was the aggressor and we were defending our homes': this would allow Balašević, but rule out Đorđević 'and others like him, who have declared themselves as Četniks, [and] should never more be allowed to appear in the Republic of Croatia'. They would also have to 'visit the graves of our dead and ask forgiveness' before beginning to perform in Croatia. In music, meanwhile, the biggest problem with Serbians was 'ekavica [...] it'll be irritating to everyone from Croatia' (Cigoj 1996). Some CR back-catalogue hits were in ekavica,

²²⁶ Specifically-Bosniak language was less problematic, but one Botinac club-owner also disliked words like 'dimije'/'feredžam' connoting Muslim ethnicity (Šimunović 1998c).

including songs by Toma Zdravković, which Lilić specifically mentioned as hard to re-release. This time, Lilić recognised ekavica as the language of a recognised minority within the state, but not part of majority national culture: ‘the problem is ekavica’, ‘people’ would be ‘shocked’, and ‘people who lost their nearest [relatives] or homes in the war’ would have to be ‘told that Toma Zdravković was a Croat’ who left Belgrade in 1988 in protest at ‘Milošević’s savagery’ (Birtić 1998c). This ethnic biography indicated the victim-centric discourse which reserved the right to judge Croatian–Serbian relations for those who had suffered at Serbian hands. It simultaneously assumed the linguistic homogeneity of ‘people’ – who implicitly all spoke ijekavica and would be ‘shocked’ if ekavica/Serbness penetrated their daily life.²²⁷

The political imperative to exclude ekavica/Serbian from cultural space greatly lessened after the governmental change in 2000, although the Croatian music industry’s idea of ‘domestic’ still left little room for Serbianness. Croatian pop musicians covering songs in ekavica still transposed them into ijekavica – e.g. Severina’s version of *Dodirni mi kolena/koljena* (a 1980s hit for Zana) or ENI’s version of *Retko/Rijetko te viđam s djevojkama/djevojkama* (originally by the Slovenian band Videosex) – a clear hint that more than one language was involved. Language was the initial motor of the *Štikla* controversy, which had begun when a Croatian tabloid picked up on a Serbian tabloid’s ekavica transcription of the song. Given this starting-point that the song might not be ‘Croatian’, the case continued with the composers and their opponents fighting over *Štikla*’s purported Croatian elements. Ekavica’s boundary-marking potential recurred in Mate Matišić’s 2007 play *Zagrebački orkestar* (*Zagreb orchestra*), which frequently played on ekavica’s conflict with Zagreb dialect in satirising folk clubs (7.3).

6.2.2 Neda Ukraden and Đorđe Novković

The negotiation of space, memory and ambiguity in Croatian popular music is illustrated by the case of Neda Ukraden, who had been born into a Serb family in Imotski (Croatia), grown up in Sarajevo, and had recorded songs by Croatian composers for Jugoton since 1982, when her songs with Rajko Dujmić and Đorđe Novković anticipated 1990s Croatian folk-pop.²²⁸ While the composers were integrated into the nationally-oriented restructuring of cultural space, Ukraden was emphatically excluded, marginalising her contribution to Croatian popular music – most demonstratively when Croatian vocalists re-recorded her Dujmić/Novković songs. Besides the problems of ethno-political ambiguity in wartime

²²⁷ Judging by the amount of Serbian music sold on Croatian market-stalls, perhaps they would not.

²²⁸ See Baker forthcoming (a).

Croatia, Ukraden's case was also affected by bitter polemics in Bosnia-Herzegovina over public figures leaving or staying in wartime Sarajevo. However, in both countries during the war it was expected that the primary criterion of national membership should be whether one performed loyalty to the nation.

In 1990 and early 1991, *Arena* treated Ukraden as one of the country's most popular showbusiness personalities and featured her on several covers – including, on 12 January 1991, her photograph behind the unrelated strapline 'Our politicians predict: 1991 – what sort of Yugoslavia?'. *Arena* last mentioned her in late August 1991 when her Bulgarian tour was postponed (Tomeković 1991a). When the Croatian media featured Ukraden again, it was with growing criticism for not maintaining contact with her former friends in Croatia (Pukanić 1992a), and then, as more information became available, for her move to Belgrade and attitude to the war. At this time choosing Belgrade, Zagreb or Sarajevo was interpreted as a pledge of allegiance to the corresponding regime, resolving ambiguity by assigning an individual to the corresponding ethnicity.

Information about Ukraden and other ex-Sarajevans initially filtered through Bosnia, where personalities like Safet Isović (a sevdah singer and Bosniak politician) spoke out against emigration to Belgrade: Isović singled out Ukraden 'run[ning] away to Belgrade and "marvel[ling]" from there that Croats and Muslims are under threat in Bosnia' (Kućinić 1992). In 1993, however, *Slobodni tjednik* printed a four-page interview with Ukraden which included her controversial statement that she 'wouldn't be safe in Sarajevo', her recording *Vidovdan* in Belgrade,²²⁹ her unrest at apparent Islamicisation in Bosnia ('I don't want my child to wear harem-pants [dimije], to kneel, to sing ilahije and kaside,²³⁰ to go on the haj [...] I want my child to wear a mini-skirt and speak English'), a lack of acknowledgement of Serbs' responsibility in the Bosnian conflict and several allegations of ethnic intolerance towards Serbs in Imotski (her grandfather's murder in 1944 by an Ustaša neighbour who had been his 'kum'; the destruction of her uncle's gravestone there in 1991; the demolition of 105 Serb houses including her own). Ukraden also related her sadness that not one ethnic group had fully accepted her:

the Bosnians call me a traitor because I'm not in Sarajevo; the Serbs call me an Ustaša and Alija [Izetbegović]'s whore because my career was connected to Sarajevo and Zagreb and they don't know I'm a Serb from Imotski; and the Croats claim I'm a Četnik because after 20 years of working with Zagreb's Jugoton, I chose Belgrade as the

²²⁹ Unlike some *Vidovdan* songs, it did not actually mention Kosovo.

²³⁰ Islamic religious songs which had been used to symbolise Bosniak ethnicity during the war (Laušević 2000).

place I would live! When I thought about it all, I understood that my only sin was: being a Serb born in Croatia! (Zlatar 1993)

A preference for western-oriented rather than domestic 'cultural and consumer models' – mini-skirts and speaking English presumably included – may be an expression of not wanting to be reduced to a single ethnicity or defined by it (Jansen 2005a:238). Yet if Ukraden was attempting to discuss the Yugoslav past's complex ethno-biographical consequences, it was lost on a politically-constructed national community where birth was insufficient to confer belonging in a new conceptual matrix where people should identify primarily as Croats (see Hodžić 2000; Zakošek 2000; Bellamy 2003; Rihtman-Augustin 2004). In public, this involved a performance of loyalty to the Croatian state and the official interpretation of the war. Living in Belgrade, Ukraden could not have performed Croatianness this way even if she had wanted to.

A contrasting example of selectively and performatively narrating of one's ethnic biography was Đorđe Novković's early-1990s public self-presentation. Novković's biography on the Croatian Composers' Society website now gives his birthplace as Šabac (Serbia), although his birthplace was sometimes given as Sarajevo, where he grew up.²³¹ On socialist-era censuses, he had declared his nationality as Yugoslav. Like many composers, he had written material in honour of Tito and Yugoslavia, including one of the best-known pop-songs about Tito (Zdravko Čolić's *Družbe Tito, mi ti se kunemo*). Such 'evidence of previous social complexity', Stef Jansen argues (2002:82), threatened the Croatian–Serbian binary in which the Croatian state had invested so much physical and symbolic power, and Jansen gives examples of Croatian villagers holding back such evidence. Celebrities' public presentation reflected the same discourses and contributed to the climate where they became necessary in everyday life.

Ukraden's claim to a Serb identity and the political connotations ascribed to it in Croatia/Bosnia made her songs unsuitable for broadcast or sale in the early 1990s, even when Croats had written them. However, the re-recording projects indicated that the performer's identity was what classified music onto one or other side of the boundary. Interestingly, the fact that many of Ukraden's lyrics had been written by Marina Tucaković from Belgrade did not disqualify them from Croatianness – perhaps because they had been in *ijekavica* all along (neither was it a problem when Magazin sang their 1980s songs with Tucaković lyrics). Dujmić's most successful songs for Ukraden (*Oči tvoje govore* and *Vrati se*

²³¹ <http://www.hds.hr/member/clan.htm?CODE=513> [accessed 17 March 2008]. In the 1990s he usually said he had declared as Yugoslav because 'Bosnian [Bosanc]' had not been available (Mihaljević 1993); once he described himself as 'by origin [...] a Montenegrin from Bijelo Polje' (Mušćet 1993).

s kišom) appeared on a 1992 album by Jasna Zlokić, but much more attention was attracted when a 1993 album by Dolores (Višnja Prsa) consisted almost entirely of Novković songs originally written for Ukraden. Radio Karlovac listeners apparently complained about the Dolores songs because they thought the station had been playing Neda Ukraden (Pukanić 1993e), and the album's promotion was also hampered by the *Slobodni tjednik* interview which foregrounded Ukraden's ethnopolitical unsuitability and required Dolores and Novković to realign their music within a narrative of loyalty to Croatia and resistance to Serbia/Serbdom.

Dolores accordingly declared an intention to erase Ukraden from Croatian memory: she stated that by 'taking over her songs I have, actually, killed Neda Ukraden', who had 'achieved everything at the expense of Croatia and her composers' and 'ended up in Belgrade'. Dolores hoped her album would 'throw Neda and her records out of all our sound-archives, and everyone will forget her', although 'those wonderful songs should not be forgotten, because nothing is their fault' (Pukanić 1993e). Dubravka Ugrešić (1998:141–2) mentions this incident in her essay on the 'confiscation of memory'. Besides the re-recordings' political justification, they offered composers the practical advantage of possible increased airplay and therefore higher royalties. However, Novković's difficulties in advertising the project on HTV indicate (much like the 1991 *Hrvatine*), that state ideology was a field of competing stances: HTV had refused to run the songs as a paid advertisement (a common early-1990s way of circumventing editorial airplay decisions), prompting Dolores to accuse HTV of supporting Ukraden by obstructing 'our political action for Neda to be forgotten' (Kruhak 1993a).

Novković, meanwhile, narrated his own identity by emphasising his constant commitment to Croatia and its culture. This included stating that Ukraden had not been popular in Serbia,²³² arguing for the authentic Croatian origins of the folk elements he used, and suggesting he had written those songs to oppose 'the terrible media forcing of those newly-composed [folk] songs from Belgrade' (Mušćet 1993). Later he explained the songs in more detail by saying they had been 'based on "ojkanje", that's Imotski-Dalmatinska zagora folk, which in reality didn't have much to do with newly-composed Belgrade and Serbian folk' (Vukšić 1994). On both occasions he criticised Ukraden for choosing Belgrade over Zagreb, where if she had 'stayed to live and sing where she was born – in Imotski [...] she would have been one of the queens of Croatian showbusiness' (Vukšić

²³² Rajko Dujmić also said this about Novi Fosili (Hudelst 1995), although they had been one of the most popular pop acts across the whole of Yugoslavia, including Serbia (Dragičević-Šešić 1994:106).

1994) – presumably continuing her 1980s rivalry with Doris Dragović. However, Novković's reconstruction of his career avoided anything which might complicate the Serbian/Croatian binary, such as Ukraden having lived in Sarajevo not Imotski for most of her life. To be ritually unmade as a Croat, she had first to be made into a *potential* Croat.

The possibility of promoting a Croatian singer to replace a now-unacceptable Serb also arose for Leo (Amir Kazić), a mid-1990s client of Novković, who seemed to strongly resemble Zdravko Čolić. Leo once suggested Novković had deliberately intended him to 'fill the gap in the segment of music which that man used to do' (Oremović 1997a), and the resemblance extended to his re-recording a 1990 Čolić song, originally titled *Maslinasto zelena* (*Olive green*), about remembering a girl Čolić had met during army service. Čolić's original provoked a highly-critical article in late 1997 attacking him for recording it 'while the JNA was torching, burning and raping across Croatia' (Glavan 1997a) – somewhat conflating the war's timescale. However, *Maslinasto zelena* had already featured unproblematically on Leo's 1996 album as *Mornarska* (*Sailor's [song]*) with extra dance beats and a chorus about a sailor (instead of a soldier) reminded of his girlfriend by the colour of the blue Adriatic (instead of the colour of an olive-branch).

Čolić, despite occasional political attacks, was rehabilitated much more easily than Ukraden. Showbusiness journalists uncritically accepted the narrative that Ukraden had made her career 'at the expense of Croatia and Croatian composers' (Rožman 1995b), and a *Nacional* article on possible Croatian–Serbian cultural exchanges indicated Ukraden was as (un)likely to perform in Croatia as Bora Đorđević, a declared Četnik (Maksimović 1996b); a source at the Croatian Embassy in Belgrade later said Ukraden was among the singers considered 'undesirable' in Croatia (Pišek 1997). Ukraden's 'harem-pants' comment to *Slobodni tjednik* must have reached Sarajevo and was still contentious in 1996, when the journalist Džavid Husić mentioned it (Zlatar 1996). In late 2000 (after Milošević's fall and Tuđman's death), Ukraden briefly visited Croatia to record an album with the Croatian composer Franjo Valentić. She gave her first interviews since 1993 to the Croatian press, although HTV management reportedly vetoed her appearance on the HTV2 talk-show *Metropolis* (Homovec 2000). The album did not secure a Croatian deal, but was released on Grand Productions in Serbia, and Ukraden made three more albums with Valentić.

Ukraden's first concert in post-Yugoslav Croatia was in Domašinec in 2003 (Đuras 2003), and she first 'returned' to Zagreb at The Best nightclub in 2005 (Konta 2005). This low-key, limited reintegration still encountered obstacles, such as a 2005 talk-show where the host Alka Vuica challenged Ukraden about her apparent disregard for Croatian wartime

suffering. Unlike Čolić, at the time of writing Neda Ukraden had not held a solo hall/arena concert in Croatia.²³³ However, she was included in several celebrations of Novković's life and work in 2007 (he died that May): she thus appeared on Zlatan Zuhrić's talk show in April 2007, a CR compilation of Novković songs, and in a February 2008 memorial concert by Novković's clients. That same month, CR finally released a compilation of her hits from its back catalogue. Her June 2008 performance at HRF – her first festival appearance in post-war Croatia – followed the same path Hari Varešanović had taken in re-entering the Croatian market, although it is too early to say whether Ukraden will be re-integrated to the same extent.

The breakdown and reconstruction of Bosnian cultural space at the expense of personalities who had left Sarajevo, and any possible links to internal Bosnian politics, are important to the Neda Ukraden case but beyond the scope of this research. However, Sarajevo musicians, especially those with Bosniak political connections, frequently attacked former colleagues (such as Ukraden, Emir Kusturica, or Goran Bregović) during Croatian media appearances: they usually narrated their own victimhood and expressed bitterness and betrayal that certain others had chosen a different side. Serbs who had gone to Serb-held territories were publicly represented as 'traitors to a multi-ethnic Bosnia', and popular music obliquely dealt with these sentiments through songs expressing love for Sarajevo (Maček 2007:51). The exclusionary side of the dynamic occurred through musicians' public statements about ex-colleagues.

6.3 Transnational cultural flows

6.3.1 Popular music and Europe

Success in 'Europe', outside the ex-Yugoslav diaspora(s), has largely eluded Croatian popular music. Even though Croatia Records regularly attended the Midem festival in France (where record labels network), the only 1990s Croatian pop act to make significant commercial progress abroad was Nina Badrić, whose disco cover of *I'm So Excited* briefly charted in Italy. In the 2000s, Karma released pop-dance albums in the Czech Republic and Slovakia after holidaymakers encountered their summer hits in Croatia. The prospect of 'world music' promotion has also attracted Croatian labels, although the industry only considers 'ethno' music suitable for this (Piškor 2006:185). It has nonetheless benefited

²³³ Čolić performed at the Dom sportova in May 2001; his compilation in CR's Platinum Collection series came out in early 2008.

certain musicians (Tamara Obrovac, Mojmir Novaković), although they are still not as well-known as certain musicians from nearby countries like Esma Redžepova, Šaban Bajramović, Marta Sebestyen, Mostar Sevdah Reunion, Taraf de Haïdouks, Goran Bregović or the Bulgarian female choirs. Darko Rundek (frontman of the 1980s new-wave band Haustor) has actually pursued his contemporary career from Paris with his new band Cargo Orkestar, and his European achievements (two internationally-distributed albums on a German label; many concerts) cannot reflect on the contemporary music industry in Croatia.

One Croatian pop composer, Tonči Huljić, has helped develop three classical crossover projects for the 'western' (including the Far Eastern) market: the all-female string groups Bond and Wild, and the (Croatian) pianist Maksim Mrvica. Bond were assembled by a UK manager who had launched a similar solo act; Huljić met their manager at Eurovision 1998 and wrote several pieces for them, often rearranging his Croatian pop songs. Croatian compositions occasionally flowing into European showbusiness is nothing new (the tunes of *Stari Pjer* and *Zora je*, composed by Đorđe Novković for Ivica Percl and Neda Ukraden, were re-recorded in several other countries), but Huljić's involvement with Bond/Wild/Mrvica represents a Croatian musician's most extensive integration into western European cultural production.

Croatian popular music also receives an annual exposure to 'Europe' (and vice versa) through Eurovision,²³⁴ in which HTV has competed on Croatia's behalf since 1993. Eurovision's structure as a contest between nations in a medium (music) which is thought to represent national cultures (Björnberg 2007) means that one criterion for selecting a national entry is whether it represents the nation appropriately for European audiences. Here, too, 'appropriateness' is evaluated with reference to certain identity-narratives and inclusion/exclusion symbols. Differences of opinion among individuals or interest-groups can therefore overlay a selection process with a contest of narratives – as occurred in both 1993 and 2006, when there were disputes over using a nationalised musical symbol at Eurovision (tamburica in 1993, Dinaric ganga/kolo in 2006) (Baker 2008a). The reticence over sending tamburica or ganga to Eurovision recalls Michael Herzfeld's (1997) concept of 'cultural intimacy', taking pleasure in a practice which contradicts official narratives of national identity and would not be understood/should not be shown to outsiders. State policy also affects selection insofar as HTV restricts participation to Croatian citizens. This largely prevents hiring external entrepreneurs like Željko Joksimović (the Serbian singer

²³⁴ On Serbian understandings of 'Europe' when hosting Eurovision, see Mitrović 2008.

who wrote the Bosnian entry in 2006), although Goran Bregović held citizenship and could therefore arrange *Štikla*. State resources are thus reserved for citizens of the state.

Dora and Eurovision were often put to domestic use during the 1990s. In 1993, Urličić used the selection of *Don't ever cry* (written by Đorđe Novković and Andrej Baša) to make a point about the songwriters' patriotism, since Baša was a Slovene and it was not Novković's fault he had been 'born in a state which resented Croatia so much' (Homovec 1993a).²³⁵ In 1996, HRT held a ceremony at the Altar of the Homeland before its delegation departed for the first post-war Eurovision. HRT's director Ivica Mudrinić laid a wreath in honour of 70 years of radio and 40 years of television in Croatia, and gave a speech connecting the delegation to Croatian history and Homeland War memory: he was pleased to be sending the delegation off 'in this historic place for the Croatian state', but also wanted to remember 'all those fallen in the Homeland War, and particularly many television workers who, sadly, are no longer among us', meaning that '[w]e have thus connected the past with the future' (Rožman 1996). If the ritual was repeated (as Mudrinić hoped), it was not reported, although 1996 did see Croatia achieve what remains its highest Eurovision score.

The visual identity of HTV's annual selection for Eurovision has always incorporated symbols of Europe. The logo designed by Ksenija Urličić and Ivica Pripadalo in 1996, a female head crowned with golden stars as 'a clear signpost towards Europe' (Urličić 1996), remains in use. Earlier set designs had followed HTV's common practice of incorporating 'key symbols of Croatian identity' (Senjković 2002:49) – which also reinforced the narrative of Croatia-in-Europe. In 1993, the lighting scattered the stage with šahovnice (the chequerboard on the Croatian coat of arms) changing into a silhouette of Croatia and then European stars; in 1995, each performer's introductory 'postcard', filmed in their hometown, included an instrumental of *Moja domovina*. Hosts also helped situate the contest within HTV's overarching narratives: in 1993 the male host welcomed viewers wishing them 'a beautiful, pleasant, and of course a peaceful night' (Croatia being still at war), and the female host added her hopes to 'send our dear Croatian song far, far into the world, right to the Eurovision stage'.

HTV's approach to Eurovision provides a rare occasion for Croatian music to actually be scrutinised by the mythologised 'Europe'. It also leads to a paradox about the 1990s: why was the tamburica, a symbol supposed to separate Croatia from the Balkans, never

²³⁵ I was once told the group performing *Don't ever cry* (an offshoot of a Rijeka choir) had themselves been multi-ethnic – containing an Italian, a Muslim, a vocalist called Naim who was 'probably' Albanian, and somebody with a 'Serb surname'. The song's official presentation did not mention this.

used to represent Croatia at Eurovision? *Leina* may perhaps be explained by 1993 presenting Croatia's first performance as an independent state (after an unsuccessful application to Eurovision in 1992), and an opportunity to propagate a Croatian perspective on the war (the selected song contained an appeal to angels for peace, a prayer for an 18-year-old boy called Ivan, and as much English as was then permissible). Urličić appears to have shared this view: 'It was wartime, every promotion of Croatia in the world was more than welcome, and Eurovision is a place where the whole of Europe watches you' (Rožman 2007c). However, several tamburica musicians expressed an interest in Eurovision later in the decade, comparing the possibilities to Greece's fame for bouzouki (Rožman 1994b; Stjepandić 1998), and the tamburica composer Miroslav Rus even claimed HTV had told him 'that I was mad and that tamburica cannot represent Croatia' (Goleš 1997). Irena Miholić (2008) argues that the 'peasant' origins ascribed to tamburica disqualified it from representing the nation internationally.

A similar point of contestation has been the Croatian style of folk-pop crossover associated with Huljić (3.3.1), whose songs have represented Croatia three times – although two anticipated his classical-crossover work. The other, Doris Dragović's *Marija Magdalena* (1999), was criticised as typical Huljić material '(half) concealing "turbo folk" sources, which try to palm themselves off to European audiences as a subvariant of "Balkan beat"' (Glavan 1999). Semi-folk music by other people was also contentious: Maja Šuput was booed in 2003 after newspapers likened her shortlisted song to Lepa Brena – which, said *Novi list*, 'Europe will surely not accept' (Strukar and Mamić 2003). In 2004, the year after Turkey won Eurovision with ethno-pop, the young R&B singer Ivana Kindl submitted *Strastvena žena* (*Passionate woman*), which contained 'eastern' melismatics and vocal ornamentation and involved her coming onstage in a sedan-chair. Rajko Dujmić remarked in a preview that 'Ivana should change the country she'll represent', ideally to 'Bosnia' (Strukar 2004), invoking existing narratives of distance from the east. However, Kindl viewed the song from a standpoint where easternness could paradoxically mean modernity, in the context of the 'oriental R&B' trend which had emerged in US hip-hop through Missy Elliott and Timbaland (see Miller 2004) – although she still left it off her 2004 album (Mikulić 2004).

Arjun Appadurai (1996:39) argues that nation-states exploit transnational media flows by exerting 'taxonomic control over difference' and also by 'domesticating difference' through 'international spectacle'. A common south-east European critique of globalisation (Iordanova 2001; Dichev 2002; Ugrešić 2004a; Volčič 2005c) suggests that unequal

international power-relations structure these representations: the economically-powerful West's desire for exotic products encourages south-east European artists to depict a backward, mystic or chaotic Balkans for western consumption. Musicians' agency in creating these images, 'albeit within limited options', should not be downplayed (Silverman 2007:336): the resultant 'consenting self-exoticism' (Iordanova 2001:61) is dynamic. Although Croatia has participated in this framework at Eurovision, *Strastvena žena* also points to an idea of the 'east' as 'glamorous and global' rather than 'backwards and Balkan', which complicates the east/west framework of cultural criticism.

6.3.2 'Backwards and Balkan' or 'glamorous and global'?

Locating Croatian music within south-east European cultural flows requires looking beyond identity-narratives of 'the Balkans' as a boundary-symbol of exclusion (see Razsa and Lindstrom 2004). A recent essay collection on Balkan popular music has argued that the musics of various south-east European countries stem from an 'Ottoman ecumene', i.e. 'an intentional sharing, interchange, collaboration, or dialogue across boundaries' during and since Ottoman rule (Buchanan 2007c:xx). This transnational flow does not necessarily lead to commonality, since the different musics still contain 'deliberately national [...] stylistic references' and may be used to mark space as 'ethnically specific', as Jane Sugarman (2007:270) argues happens with Albanian music in Kosovo/Macedonia. Certain transnational factors (melodies, rhythms, vocal practices, dancing, cover-versions – and media such as Balkanika Music Television) nonetheless connect the pop-folk music of Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Greece and Turkey. Ambivalence to this music's rural connotations occurs throughout the region, and in many countries pop-folk also dramatises the socio-economic effects of post-socialist transition.

Croatia – perhaps tellingly – does not have its own chapter in the *Ottoman ecumene* collection, but sometimes appears on the fringes of discussion: a Croatian parody of the well-travelled Turkish folk-song *Üsküdarı gider iken* (Buchanan 2007b:39–43); duets between Croatian and other ex-Yugoslav singers (Rasmussen 2007:83; Pettan 2007:378); the relative marginalisation of Dinaric music on radio and television (Pettan 2007:367). The folk parody, Vatrogasci's *Raspići-opići*, satirises the 1980s Bosnian style of overtly-Turkish NCFM (see Rasmussen 1996) – and also Boney M's *Ra-ra Rasputin*. Buchanan's reading (2007b:42–3) appears to confirm the dominant Croatian narrative of eastern music as a foreign imposition from socialist Yugoslavia, so that it 'acknowledges Croatia's participation in a Yugoslav Orient, while simultaneously representing a decided

disassociation from it'. However, there are also flows of 'easterness' from the *west* influencing Croatian music. Balkan pop-folk may, as Ljerka Rasmussen argues (2007:90), 'show that this Orient has never been the site of cultural imagination constructed by the West'; yet the musical east as constructed by the west also reaches Croatia through contemporary US-based pop imagery – e.g. Shakira's music or the 'oriental R&B' invoked by Ivana Kindl. The frame of the east as 'backwards and Balkan' is thus intersected by another frame where eastern imagery may paradoxically be 'glamorous and global', as long as it is appropriated knowingly.

Glamorous-and-globalness comes into play in singles by several female singers (Nina Badrić, Lana Jurčević, Žanamari Lalić, Ivana Kindl) who are not as culturally problematic as Severina/Magazin and are classified as 'pop-rock' rather than 'zabavna' in the Croatian charts – the place for music with international/western roots.²³⁶ Badrić's *Takvi kao ti* and Lalić's *Susana mi čitaj* were both released in 2004, shortly after *Strastvena žena*, and contained 'eastern' strings, ornamentation and melismatic backing vocals. Jurčević's *Jedan razlog* in 2006 followed the same format,²³⁷ with an instrumental sitar break, and Badrić's similarly-styled *Imati pa nemati* was the lead single on her 2007 album and was heavily promoted by T-Mobile (which installed equipment on Zagreb bus/tram shelters to download the song to mobile phones). None of these songs seem to have come up in the frequent discussions of 'turbofolk' in Croatia – even though they do not sound dissimilar to contemporary Serbian pop-folk production, which has striven towards a western R&B model. Indeed, one informant who often drew on urban/rural European/Balkan symbolism when talking to me said that the only good thing about *Imati pa nemati* was 'that oriental sound' while complaining it did not suit Badrić's voice.

Situating this trend within the complex of value-judgements surrounding popular music leaves the ambiguity of eastern musical signifiers to be resolved through further criteria – such as the singers' previous cultural connotations, and perhaps also the abstractness and geographical distance of their temporary 'easterness'. Đorđe Novković distinguished the Indian/Turkish east from the Serbian east while commenting on his abandoned attempt to send Severina to Dora 2004 with something resembling the 2003 Turkish Eurovision

²³⁶ Unlike federal Yugoslavia or Serbia, Croatia does not have a separate folk chart (*Arena* did publish a tamburica chart in 1996–97) – as if naturalising the assumption it does not exist. Semi-folk music therefore counts as zabavna, although in Serbia folk and zabavna would be separate.

²³⁷ Another of Jurčević's hits, *Odlaziš*, covers a Greek song by Despina Vandi. Greek covers are rare in Croatia (unless you are Alka Vuica – another transgressive characteristic of this singer), but far more common in Serbia and throughout the 'Ottoman ecumene'.

winner: he had known 'it was a perfect formula for Europe' but recognised there was 'no chance to go forward with it on home ground' where:

as soon as you get a sitar and use an Indian, let alone a Turkish, melody, immediately everyone bristles and says it's something from Serbia. For us the entire living east has become Serbia. (Jergović 2004b)

Leaving aside Novković's own complicity in the othering of Serbia – and the controversy his son would cause with a Eurovision composition for Severina – his remarks here suggested another more distant and therefore less threatening east.

The tendency to play with signs of easternness (e.g. Madonna's *Ray of light*-era Indian costume) has become increasingly visible in Anglo-American popular music (Hutnyk 2000:120). Techniques for conveying this playful distance appear in various Ivana Kindl and Lana Jurčević videos: *Strastvena žena*'s video was set in a brick-walled pub with a pool-table, with Kindl joined by fashionably-dressed young men (one wearing a T-shirt advertising a US trainers brand, another wearing a flat cap). The sedan-chair and feathered fan from Kindl's Dora performance appeared in this environment, suggesting fantasy within a modern/urban/western setting. Jurčević's *Jedan razlog* video contained various plots of emphatically-staged exoticism and wildness (choreography in a forest and a black-sand beach; Jurčević holding a tiger cub), and her video for *Najbolja glumica* (her 2006 folk-tinged Dora entry) framed the costumed choreography with backstage shots of Jurčević watching her performance on camera. These images can arguably be read as signalling the performers are subjects rather than objects of an essentialising gaze, thus excusing them membership of the essentialised east.²³⁸

However, successfully adopting the strategy depends on a singer's claim to glamorous-and-globalness being *recognised*. Silva Mišanović, one of three avowed female pop-folk singers in Croatia (alongside Slađana Petrušić and Vesna Pezo), claimed the oriental-R&B label for her 2006 album *Totem*:

We're following global music trends and I hear the oriental pop melos has been brought into contemporary production. Nelly Furtado, Justin Timberlake, Pussycat Dolls, Black Eyed Peas, 50 Cent do it that way... (Topčagić 2006)

Mišanović was already well-known by the name Super Silva, and happily associated herself with 'turbofolk' in the late 1990s (Konestra 1998). Although she had abandoned the Super

²³⁸ See also cameras/projectors in videos by Gibonni (*Oprosti*, 2001) and Đani Stipaničev (*Budi noćas mirno more*, 2006) – both supposedly-modern reworkings of Dalmatian traditional music.

Silva label by 2006, her previously-developed image (from the 'eastern east') appeared to obstruct her taking on the Badrić/Kindl role (a 'western east'). One informant, involved in promoting *Totem*, explained the problem: after 7–8 years singing narodnjaci it was hard to show people she now belonged to something different, because they still thought 'she's called Super Silva and she has big breasts'. The persona has certainly remained pervasive: elsewhere in our interview, he called Mišanović 'Super Silva' himself.

The 'glamorous-and-global' use of the east differs from the 'Balkan counter-culture' discussed by Alexander Kiossev (2002:184–5), which revels in transgressing dominant narratives which define identity in opposition to the Balkans (as in much of Alka Vuica's music). Rather, by performing comfort with an overdetermined east and an ability to divest oneself of easternness as quickly as one can put it on, the 'glamorous-and-global' strategy stakes out a privileged position for Croatian musicians (and Croatia) in global cultural flows. Contemporary western popular culture displays a 'phantasmagoric fascination with the East' which problematically essentialises South Asian and Middle Eastern difference (Hutnyk 2000:124). Zygmunt Bauman (1998:53) has characterised the globalised world as somewhere where 'locals watch the globals': yet where globals dress up as locals, demonstrating the freedom to play with eastern signifiers serves as a claim that a musician's/ nation's globality and westernness can be taken for granted. Ivana Kindl in a sedan-chair claims the westernness of Madonna in a sari, and the 'east' paradoxically (from a Croatian viewpoint) serves as a resource for proving oneself part of the 'west'.

6.3.3 Experiencing transnational music

Even though the number of my interviews was not statistically significant, individuals' recollections of their experiences with newly-transnational music can show ways people think about the idea of Croatia having belonged to a Yugoslav cultural space: it has not been uprooted, even though its acknowledgement has become more fraught. Vesna, an activist in her early thirties, used to work as a local radio music editor in Zadar. Once at 2am she played a song by EKV and got a phone call saying they were 'Četniks'; the next caller asked her to play Partibrejkers too. However, the existence of a shared cultural past does not automatically mean a shared cultural present: Krešo, for instance, told me he liked EKV but did not follow the current Serbian scene. Croatian state policy may therefore have been more effective in discouraging new connections than severing old ones – although the border-crossing of new Serbian pop-folk singers (e.g. Seka Aleksić, Indira Radić) has been more successful than their rock counterparts'. By contrast, one extremely-

productive transnational flow (western pop-rock music) was conspicuously absent from my interviews: it seemed never to be problematised as an identity issue.

When people made meaning from music, its socio-cultural connotations of music (particularly its position in the rock/folk binary), seemed much more important than its 'ethnicity' – which may account for the different media treatment of Serbian rock and Serbian folk. In Amanda's experience, listening to a rock band from Serbia would provoke far less comment than listening to Serbian narodnjaci, perhaps because 'rock is something universal, a narodnjak isn't, it's always the product of [a] specific region'. She alluded to the paradox of people listening to both Croatian patriotic music (e.g. Thompson) and folk music from the other side in the war, but did not come up with an answer except perhaps 'a chronic lack of musical taste.' I have no idea what, if anything, the girls dancing a kolo during a public performance by Žiga (whose music accompanies Međimurje folk-songs with a brass band, veering into čoček) in March 2007 thought about the potential symbolic associations between trumpeters and Serbian nationhood or Međimurje's brass-band tradition itself, but whatever they thought they were doing, they did not think it anything inappropriate to do in an iconic city square.

When I asked Croatian students about their memories of popular music in the early 1990s – i.e. during the disintegration of Yugoslavia and construction of a primarily national cultural space – they remembered what people were listening to at school: usually the teen star Tajči, who was Croatian anyway. Kristina, about a decade older, told me Neda Ukraden had also been popular among primary-school children: she may well have been, although nobody who attended primary school at the time mentioned her. When I asked Antonija (24 when we spoke in 2007) whether she had heard of Ukraden, she said her mother sometimes talked about her at home but she had never heard any Neda Ukraden songs herself. I asked what had happened to her, and Antonija told me that she did not know: 'she wasn't talked about any more' and 'for years nobody mentioned her,' so there was nothing much she could say.

The most detailed Neda Ukraden story came from Mario, who mentioned her unprompted during a conversation about Đorđe Novković. Mario related she had been born in Imotski, moved to Sarajevo, lived in Zagreb in the 1980s and moved to Belgrade solely because of 'those tensions'. During the war 'the Croats destroyed everything' in her small village close to Imotski (he spoke softly and made flattening movements with his hands), and she moved to Belgrade for good. He said the same thing had happened to three other Croatian personalities with ambiguous ethnic biographies: Marina Perazić (from

the 1980s band *Denis i Denis*; she had married a musician from Novi Sad and moved to Belgrade), Rade Šerbedžija and the Croatian National Theatre's leading actress (Mira Furlan). When I asked when it had begun to be important that 'for instance, Neda Ukraden was a Serb', Mario related experiences from his schooldays in Dubrovnik: you didn't always know a girl called 'Slobodanka' was a Serb – until Milošević came to power – although you noticed it more with Muslims and Albanians because they had strange names (Mario's friend Dijana added it had been the same in Rijeka, her hometown). He then recalled that 'we' didn't actually say 'Serb', but called someone 'trofazna'²³⁹ because they crossed themselves with three fingers (a characteristically Serb gesture) – a distinction made according to observable behaviour rather than abstract ethnic labelling. He repeated that noticing ethnicity/Serbness 'started with Milošević' – and (jumping over the intervening years) said that the strange thing was that 'last week' during the Serbian elections 'we' had been watching Serbian television all evening, and that there were increasing numbers of mixed marriages in Knin, 'until it explodes again...'. He stood up and started washing the dishes.

Conclusion

By focusing on music, this chapter has shown in detail how space and ethnicity were reconfigured during Yugoslavia's disintegration and Croatia's establishment as a separate nation-state. The phasing-out of *ekavica*, the anti-NCFM campaign and Neda Ukraden's exclusion from musical memory were integral to the ideologised media activities (Thompson 1994; Skopljanac Brunner ed. 2000; Senjković 2002; Žanić 2007; Žarkov 2007) which aimed to reconstitute Croatia as a community where homogenous ethnic belonging was the most salient aspect of identity. These developments in turn sat alongside elite-driven efforts to redefine social reality violently (Gagnon 2004) during a war most ordinary Croats regarded as just and defensive. This chapter has also shown how the post-war rebuilding of cultural contacts was affected by a web of domestic and foreign political and economic interests and the backdrop of a securely-established Croatian state.

However, it would be reductive to consider that the 1991–95 conflict remains the only context for producing and enjoying music 13–17 years later. The memory of the war, and especially of Croatian suffering, admittedly remains a discursive resource with which opposition to certain musical products (above all Serbian pop-folk) can be legitimised.

²³⁹ Literally 'three-phase' (of electrical appliances).

However, there is little to suggest that listening or dancing to Serbian pop-folk is actually interpreted as a political act or an act of ethnic reconciliation by those who take part in it (as opposed to those who observe it). Sometimes listening to Serbian rock has probably had more political meaning (see Jansen 2005a), such as Đorđe Balašević's 2001 concert in Pula (during a summer of anti-ICTY demonstrations) where fans from Split attended with 'We are all Đorđe Balašević' banners to mock the demonstrators' slogan about Mirko Norac (Sarač and Jelača 2001). The author of the long-running *antiturbfolk* blog presented his listening to Balašević (and Croatian bands like Majke) as an act of defiance against the folk worldview's supposed lack of culture.²⁴⁰ Balašević's appeal nonetheless extends beyond the political: the only informant who mentioned him when I asked what she liked to listen to enjoyed his humour and did not talk about his political engagement, although she did feel that people who objected to him did so because of his origins.

The 'Thompson-and-Ceca' paradox, if not cliché, of a Croatian audience enjoying patriotic music (including musical commemoration of fighting a Serbian enemy) on the one hand and Serbian pop-folk music on the other is still unexplained. It is probably worth saying that the Serbian pop-folk in question is not a direct political equivalent of Croatian patriotic music: even though one can argue that Serbian turbofolk's imagery and gender relations promoted the Milošević regime's conservative values (Kronja 2001), the songs rarely mention Serbia or war (unlike music by the Bajić Brothers or the so-called 'Krajina songs' about refugees). In terms of subject-matter, Ceca's music is more like mainstream female-voiced Croatian pop than Thompson's songs: the equivalence of Thompson and Ceca has more to do with their biographical connections to the war. One potential resolution to the paradox appears in Mattijs van de Port's work on Romani nightclub music in Novi Sad – where, as in Zagreb, the supposedly-civilised Habsburg past is an important reference-point in local identity-narratives (van de Port 1999b:9). Van de Port (1998:154) argues that enjoying Roma music enables Serbs to celebrate precisely the aspects of their culture which have led to their semi-exclusion from the west. Does Serbian music (itself with strong Roma elements) serve as the same sort of Other in Croatia as Roma music does in Serbia? Or maybe we are all reading too much into the music played in places people go to get drunk, dance and meet (usually) the opposite sex.

Awareness of the long-term cultural effects of Croatia's independence from Yugoslavia, and of the continued instrumentalisation of war memory, should not divert attention from

²⁴⁰ 'Daleko je Europa...', *antiturbfolk*, <http://antiturbfolk.blog.hr/2006/06/1621183642/daleko-je-europa.html> [accessed 17 March 2008].

the fact that Croatia is also situated within wider regional and global cultural flows. The history and evolution of central-European schlager, Italian festival song, south-east European pop-folk, English-language rock and Black American hip-hop (a non-exhaustive list) all affect music-making and audiences' tastes in Croatia, although their relative impact and visibility have varied over time. Motti Regev (2007b:318) argues that the pop-rock genre itself blurs '[t]he difference between what counts as "exterior" or "interior" to national culture': so it is generally not thought un-Croatian for Gibonni or Prljavo Kazalište to pick up an electric guitar. Perhaps this suggests an unmarked taken-for-grantedness of a globally-mediated cultural form for which musicians need not account or apologise.

This chapter's focus on points of conflict has illustrated contradictions among various identity-narratives in Croatia, but runs the risk of downplaying cultural flows which are not so subject to dispute. The transnationalism of rock is one example; another is the Macedonian singer Toše Proeski's entry into the Croatian market, which was uncontested during his lifetime: Proeski had released his first 'Croatian' album – in *ijekavica* – a few months before his untimely death in 2007.²⁴¹ An account of cultural flows in the ex-Yugoslav states would also remain incomplete without answering several questions which were beyond the scope of my research: how did Slovenian state policy towards Serbian musicians develop (enabling 1990s transnational concert-going), and what domestic cultural politics affected it? How was popular music politicised in Bosnia to reconstruct a 'Bosnian' community, e.g. around the party-political narrative of Sarajevo under siege? Has Croatian music been recontextualised for local political ends in Serbia, where Mira Marković promoted an idiosyncratic idea of a continuing Yugoslavia, and why is Croatian popular music so much more compatible with contemporary Serbian cultural space than vice versa? How did supporters of Montenegrin independence promote Montenegro's distance from Serbia through popular music – including music from Croatia? These unanswered questions suggest the impossibility of fully understanding Yugoslavia's breakdown or legacy by focusing solely on one country.

²⁴¹ Proeski's career path in Croatia followed the 'Bosniak' model, increasing his prominence through duets with Croatian singers (Toni Cetinski, Antonija Šola) in 2006–07. He had launched in Serbia in 2004, singing in *ekavica*. Since his death 'he' has released several posthumous singles in Croatia. In April 2008 several of his Porin nominations were removed because he was a Macedonian not a Croatian citizen (his songs written by Croatians remained recognised).

7 Audience membership

The previous chapter has reflected on whether ‘Croatia’ made an appropriate analytical focus for this research; it is also worth reflecting on whether looking at narratives themselves was an appropriate way to approach a cultural phenomenon which is largely experienced through embodied practices and social interaction (see Sugarman 1997:32–3).²⁴² Indeed, Chapter 5 has already established that many of the meanings individuals attach to popular music actually have to do with what happens during social experiences where music is involved. Wendy Fonarow (2006) argues that live musical audiences are situated within a ‘participant structure’ which gives all participants a context for understanding other people’s bodily behaviour. Talking about music and getting other people to talk about it can therefore not tell us enough about how people make meaning out of music: we have to experience it too, even though as researchers we are by definition not experiencing it the way that most audience-members are.

During most weeks of my fieldwork I attended at least two occasions which had something to do with music – from concerts in a range of genres to informal parties where recorded music was played throughout. This chapter draws on participant observation of three events (a sporting celebration in Zagreb’s main square; Thompson’s 2007 stadium concert in Zagreb; a play about folk clubs) where narratives of collective identity were foregrounded. However, observations of other events have often been used to illustrate particular points earlier in the thesis, such as the emergent shift in the subjectivity of klapa audiences as the music moves to larger venues. Yet some of the most telling moments of observation were on the smallest scale – such as the birthday party where an (extremely patient) reveller tried to show me how to swing my hips properly and dance the *čoček* with which everyone else had started accompanying the Goran Bregović track on the stereo, since I was obviously the only person there who had not acquired the knowledge instinctively while growing up. The experience brought home for the first time how members of a society socialise each other into the conventions of group behaviour, even though I never quite got the hang of the dance.

Most of the big or small events I took part in could be thought of as rituals, with repeated structures and communal participation. Thinking about rituals involves another challenge to the theoretical basis of my research, given Paul Connerton’s argument

²⁴² Thanks to Ger Duijzings for emphasising this.

(1989:70–1) that when it comes to collective memory (which a collective identity implicitly requires) what transmits it best is joint participation in the repeated structure of rituals, rather than myths (or narratives). Connerton perhaps goes too far in disregarding the content of rituals altogether and focusing on their communally-performative structure – and moreover leaves no room for agency in planning, organising and performing ceremonies (Mitchell 2002:183; see Handelman 1988). Following David Kertzer (1988:66–7), however, rituals can still produce solidarity without shared belief as long as some common symbol of inclusion or exclusion is agreed on – and music is certainly a field where polysemic participation comes into play (Lundberg et al. 2003:16).

This chapter therefore begins to address the interaction of narratives and embodied practices that goes on when audience-members negotiate the conventions of spectatorship in a particular situation. Fonarow sees musical performances as an instance where Bourdieu's notion of a group's habitus – common-sense conventions which 'go[...] without saying' to make behaviour seem sensible (Bourdieu 1977:167) – makes itself extremely evident. Identity-narratives about what a group is and is not (and how to recognise belonging or non-belonging) help structure these conventions, along with an appreciation of (in)appropriate behaviour at the particular kind of occasion: applying the wrong conventions or not recognising what the group expects as the 'right' subjectivity for the occasion would quickly show that one did not belong. Narratives and embodied practices coincide when the unspoken conventions of identification and participation are working as they 'should', in which case the chances are nobody will notice. However, the methodology of focusing on points of conflict can be extended to these observations too – looking at points where audience membership and the identity-narratives supposedly dramatised by the event were not necessarily in harmony.

7.1 The waterpolo celebration

In April 2007 the Croatian waterpolo team won gold at the world championships and returned triumphantly to Zagreb, where a reception/concert ('doček') was held in their honour on Trg Bana Jelačića, the central square – symbolically a citizens' meeting-place (Rihtman-Auguštin 2004). The event provided a free lunchtime spectacle for passers-by and workers in central Zagreb, but was also broadcast live by HTV across the nation (and beyond, for viewers receiving a HTV signal in neighbouring countries or watching an online feed). A celebratory doček, where several well-known singers/groups are hired at

the city council's expense to entertain the crowd before the presentation of the winners and their medals, is a common way of celebrating national sporting success in Croatia.

However, as large live events with large crowds they also have the potential to be disrupted and stage undesired narratives of identity. Thompson's performance at a handball doček in Zagreb in February 2003, for instance, caused controversy when audience members reacted to the introduction of *Čavoglave* with raised-fist salutes (Tomičić 2003), and provoked a scandal about his music's potential far-right connotations (see 4.3.1).²⁴³

1990s discourses about popular music in the context of national culture were matched if not exceeded by discourses about sport. Sporting successes were presented as reflecting on the state rather than just the individuals involved, all the more so when Croatia's third place at the 1998 World Cup appeared to illustrate its ability to compete with leading western European nations (Bellamy 2003:113-4). During the war sports players, like musicians, were often deployed for propaganda purposes rather than active service, and when conscripted in peacetime they both benefited from a special unit which allowed them to continue their careers. Sport was further tied to the HDZ party-state with the appointment of Antun Vrdoljak as head of the Croatian Olympic Committee. Tuđman's interest in sport extended to his twice renaming the capital's top football club Dinamo Zagreb (to HAŠK-Gradański then Croatia Zagreb), which was intended to permanently represent the nation in European football (Vrcan 2002). The club quickly reverted to its own name after Tuđman's death, but the perception of sports governing bodies as conservative Tuđmanist strongholds was maintained by frequent media statements from prominent sports figures.

The identity-signifying objectives of sport and music merged when musicians were commissioned or inspired to compose songs in honour of club or national teams. As during the wartime convergence of music and news, 'official' and 'alternative' repertoires emerged around contentious issues (Dinamo fans steadfastly ignored Željko Krušlin's bland Croatia Zagreb anthem in favour of Pips, Chips & Videoclips' combative *Dinamo ja volim* (*I love Dinamo*)), and decision-makers sometimes found themselves in competition with actors from other fields of the para-state. In 1998, for instance, the football association's official World Cup anthem *Idemo do kraja* was overshadowed by contributions from more prominent performers. Severina experienced a landmark in her career when the football team adopted her song *Djevojka sa sela* (*Village girl*) as an unofficial anthem even though it had nothing to do with sport, and another unofficial composition – Baruni's *Neka pati koga*

²⁴³ The question of whether Thompson should perform this time apparently did not arise because it was Lent, and as a strict Catholic he traditionally did not perform.

smeta (*Tough luck if you're bothered*) – outlived *Idemo do kraja* to become Croatia's most popular football song. Besides its musicological interest as a departure from Baruni's typical neo-tamburica music (3.1.4), the song harmonised with the dominant media narrative that sporting success had shown Croatia the equal of larger countries that had ridiculed it:

Rekli su nam da smo spori pa su Nijemce poslali
A mi smo im dali tricu pa su kući otišli²⁴⁴

Accordingly, Croatian bells should ring out ('nek' hrvatska zvona zvone') because 'we have the champions' ('mi imamo šampione') – and if that bothered you it was tough luck ('neka pati koga smeta'). The song has been revived for later championships and even given extra lyrics to suit other sporting moments in tennis or skiing.

Croatian sports songs are overwhelmingly performed by males about males, although an exception was the 2002 World Cup anthem *Hrvatice vas vole* (*Croatian women love you*) by Ivana Banfić and Claudia Beni. However, the novelty of its gendering did not extend beyond the female voices: Banfić and Beni promised that 'all this country's women will pray to God for you, for the winners' ('a sve žene ove zemlje za vas Boga molit će, molit će za pobjednike'), and reminded them that 'all Croatian women love you' or 'Croatian women love you all' ('Hrvatice vas vole sve') even if things went wrong. The team soon had an opportunity to verify the latter statement when they were eliminated in the group stage, but the innovation was not repeated. The image of women seeing men off to exert themselves for the nation in a remote location maintained the gender constructs of wartime popular music, although the site of competition had become the tournament's Far Eastern host countries rather than the front.

The (entirely male) line-up of performers at the waterpolo doček was a mixture of musicians with a connection to Zagreb (Kvartet Gubec, Prljavo Kazalište, Baruni) or the neighbouring Zagorje region (Žiga), to Dalmatia (Oliver Dragojević, Tomislav Bralić, Mišo Kovač) and/or to famous songs about Croatia (Baruni, Kazalište, Bralić). Dalmatia being the centre of Croatian waterpolo, the 'national' team came overwhelmingly from that region – predictably enough, but still a potential source of tension should there be other grounds for regional rivalry. The musical selection combined old-fashioned Zagreb 'šlageri' in kajkavian dialect (Kvartet Gubec), rock by a well-known Zagreb band (Kazalište) and a re-interpretation of Zagorje brass music (Žiga) with typical Dalmatian pop (Dragojević, Kovač, Bralić). This recognised the distinctiveness of inland and coastal

²⁴⁴ 'They said we're slow so they sent the Germans/and we scored three against them so they went home' (in the World Cup quarter-final).

Croatia but subsumed them both within a national framework signalled by the chequered shirts/accessories in the audience and, of course, the fact that the team had won in Croatia's name at a competition between states. Several performers sang their songs about the nation,²⁴⁵ and Kovač's performance in particular alluded to inland-coastal unity under the nation: he changed the last verse of his song *Dalmacija u mom oku* (*Dalmatia in my eye*) to 'Croatija u mom oku', and concluded with a speech that Dinamo and Hajduk Split fans should cheer for their clubs throughout their life 'but don't fight among yourselves, we're a small people.' Kovač had expressed a similar commitment to reconciling Zagreb and Split in 1994, a time of much greater inland/coastal rivalry (2.1.2).

I watched the concert near the front of the square, in a space mainly occupied by teenagers in same-sex groups who had installed themselves there before it started or drifted along after school. Further back the audience consisted of families and curious passers-by. Maybe one in ten spectators were wearing the national football shirt or scarf, and far fewer wore waterpolo caps; two of the football scarves (out of many hundreds) were black not red-and-white and bore the slogans 'Za dom spremni' and 'Opet će se gusta magla spustiti', usually interpreted as references to the NDH (4.3.2). What people brought with them suggested the extent of their commitment to the occasion varied: some had dressed up and arrived well before the start and others, often with shopping bags at their feet, had happened on the concert while changing trams and stopped for a look. Although the doček's organisers envisaged a clear purpose (the celebration of a national sporting success), the audience did not necessarily have one.

Wendy Fonarow (2006) observes that audiences at gigs tacitly arrange themselves into zones where people behave in particular ways (e.g. moshing; evaluating the music; professional interaction) and have internalised the conventions of embodied practices in different parts of the venue. At least in my section of the square, the doček crowd – perhaps because it was too diverse, perhaps because the space was unenclosed and much larger than a usual concert venue – had not quite agreed on its self-regulating mechanisms. When seven or eight male youths started pushing each other during *Ruža hrvatska* then linking arms and shoulder-charging other spectators, the result was not a stabilised pit typical of the front of a rock concert but glares from the chargees and much anxious stepping back to avoid a fight, although nobody reprimanded the youths for their behaviour. The incident was cut short by the team arriving on stage, at which one

²⁴⁵ Kazalište's *Ruža hrvatska*, Bralić's own *Croatijo* as well as *Vivat Croatia* (originally Đani Maršan) and *Kome bi šumilo moje more sinje* (originally Milo Hrnić), Baruni's *Neka pati koga smeta* (the only song in their set). The folk ensemble Lado also sang the national anthem after the team was introduced.

spectator raised a quickly-spreading chant of 'Mi Hrvati' ('We Croats' – a common sporting slogan). It nonetheless showed that the event did not just serve as an occasion where shared bodily practices reproduced a collective belonging: within the audience space there was also potential for a clash of bodily practices to disrupt the collective celebration.

7.2 Thompson's Maksimir concert

Thompson's concert at the Maksimir stadium in June 2007 also invited its audience to participate in a celebration of national identity – but this time the narrative was much more strongly contested after Croatia Records's attempts to counter allegations of extremism against him. Audience behaviour was thus under much more scrutiny – since the 'fascist' right-handed salutes by certain audience members had contributed in large part to the perception of Thompson as an ultra-nationalist. The Maksimir concert, accompanied by intensive publicity in *Arena* and *Večernji list*, was the culmination of a tour which had begun in Vukovar on 13 April and included several other ex-front-line cities such as Gospić, Knin, Šibenik and Dubrovnik: Thompson explained this had been done deliberately 'because of the symbolism they carry, so that we can come first of all to those people who endured most in the war' (Grubišić 2007).

Much pre-concert publicity focused on the arrangements for one of the largest concerts to be held in the country that year (how many security guards would be hired, how long it would take to construct the set, etc.) and the free tickets for veterans and war invalids. Less routinely, the preparations for the concert also involved a policy on Ustaša symbols. The concert organiser Miljenko Ćurić supported the bringing of 'Croatian symbols' to the concert whereas 'Ustaša ones are banned' (Smoljanec and Dosen 2007), but did not define the boundary between symbols of Croatians and Ustašism.²⁴⁶ The organisers' policy did not satisfy the Simon Wiesenthal Center, headed by Ephraim Zuroff, which called on Thompson to speak out during the concert itself and 'publicly condemn any performance, recording or reproduction of the murderous Ustaša rousing-song [budnica] "Jasenovac i Gradiška Stara"'. Thompson used a talk-show appearance to reiterate that 'Gradiška is not part of my repertoire' and that 'the Homeland War was a psychological war in which everyone sang all sorts of things and all sorts of things happened' (Županić et al. 2007).

²⁴⁶ Right-wing political organisers had also begun to pay attention to the symbols displayed at their events. Željko Striza from Kaštel HVIDRA, who had organised a pro-Gotovina protest in Split in December 2005, had asked attendees 'not to bring any symbols, except state [ones]. I.e., we don't want either Ustaša or Communist insignia, because it could only damage Gotovina' (Miljuš and Sever Šeni 2005). The elision of Ustaša symbols had therefore become a deliberate strategy to resist marginalisation.

The concert therefore took place amid contestation over the proper response to Croatian history during the Second World War.

I watched the concert from the west stand, which contained a more diverse audience than many of the next day's newspapers suggested. Two teenage boys wearing black T-shirts (and a sister or girlfriend in a black camisole whom they ignored throughout the concert) in front of me lived up to the dominant media image of Thompson fans, as did a group of four or five teenage girls in black tops. To my right sat a shaven-headed man in his forties with a faded tattoo of a guards brigade emblem on his arm (presumably a veteran), another man his age and two small children. The ex-guardsman called out his unit's nickname to a group of similarly-aged men in navy blue polo shirts at the front of the stand: one climbed the stairs, embraced him and went back to the group. Two men in their twenties sat behind them, one in a blue checked shirt and the other in a green T-shirt; they took no part in the singing except during *Čavoglave* (still Thompson's biggest hit). A couple in their fifties stood to my left and never joined in chanting either, although sang, swayed and raised their arms during the songs about villages and weddings. As the audience filed up the steps I briefly caught sight of a nun.

Both the Maksimir concert and the waterpolo doček could be construed as events which foregrounded the nation, but the collective image of the audience differed. Members of the doček audience who had dressed for the occasion (which many had not) wore the national sporting clothing with the red/white šahovnica pattern. At Maksimir the dominant colour of audience dress was indeed black, but this cannot be interpreted as a joint political statement by thousands of spectators – perhaps, indeed, a convention has emerged that one wears black to go and see Thompson just as (for instance) rave audiences tended to dress in fluorescent colours. The range of emblems on concert-goers' black T-shirts ranged from Thompson's official logo and the 'no left turn' joke from *Iza devet sela* to the logo of the US nu-metal band Linkin Park and a drawing of Bart Simpson. That year was the first time Croatia Records had produced Thompson merchandise in any other colour than black: T-shirts and scarves with the new album's logo were also available in olive green, and were worn by some spectators. Given the firm association between Thompson and black clothing and the potentially unwelcome connotations of the link, this too might have been part of the initiative to diffuse his image.

The marketing of Thompson's album had used more distant historical symbolism to minimise recent wartime references in favour of a more generalised patriotism which avoided 20th-century controversies. The concert's design too reflected the medieval

strategy, with video walls arranged like towers and a life-size prop of the sword which Thompson planted in the 'ground' during *Dolazak Hrvata*, the downturned sword supposedly being a heraldic symbol of peace (Jindra 2007). Tomislav Bralić, the only guest performer, sang *Croatijo*. The 24 songs Thompson himself performed were mainly patriotically- or birthplace-themed songs from post-1998 albums: *Čavoglave*, the only exception, was 21st instead of its traditional opening position. Beginning the concert with *Početak* instead framed other songs in the new album's context of devotional patriotism rather than directly evoking the Homeland War. None of Thompson's mid-1990s romantic songs were performed, nor (unlike 2002) were any of his other wartime ones; the post-1998 emphasis also excluded *Grkinja*, which had produced anti-Serbian chants at earlier concerts (4.1.3). The wartime songs, particularly *Anica*, contained the most problematic calls to violence and might not have sat well with the new album's more contemplative tone. Nonetheless, Thompson retained *Čavoglave*, with its overt aggression and its controversial 'za dom spremni' introduction. Dropping it would undoubtedly have signalled a new phase in his career. However, not only might it have seemed a concession to Thompson's critics, but it might have undermined his personal authenticity as an ordinary man from the village who had ended up a professional musician but kept his values intact. Performing *Čavoglave* ritually restated Thompson's origins and claimed a right to speak out about the war and memory. It was immediately followed by *Neka ni'ko ne dira...*, on which Thompson defends his worldview against critics.

Unlike the 2002 Poljud concerts, where Thompson had hailed Norac and Gotovina (4.1.3), he did not make any political statements at Maksimir. The nearest he came to reacting to Zuroff was to defend his own ideology by saying:

Today they're attacking me [on the grounds] that we are fascists and Nazis, and thus attacking all of you here, but that's not what we are. We are Croatian patriots. Let's tell everyone that there are dreams we will never give up because this country was created with blood and sweat. (Grubišić and Kupanovac 2007)

The crowd responded with chants of 'U boj, u boj, za narod svoj' ('Into battle, into battle, for your/our people'), a common football chant also used in the backing vocals of *Kletva Kralja Zvonimira*. Thompson did not mention Ustašism during the concert – although, as at previous concerts, some audience members were prepared to directly associate themselves with it. This went against Thompson's public statement before the concert that spectators who wanted to wear military symbols should bring 'symbols of the victorious Croatian Army from the Homeland War' (Alač 2007). In 2002, after the Poljud

controversy, he had similarly said that he would prefer them to wear symbols ‘of the brigades who brought freedom to Croatia during the Homeland War’ (Grubišić 2002). This did not occur, either because of a lack of demand or a lack of supply.

T-shirts and accessories with Ustaša logos, portraits of Pavelić or NDH slogans can often be bought at market stalls, and were indeed sold outside Thompson’s concerts in 2002 (though not at Maksimir in 2007).²⁴⁷ Similar items commemorating Homeland War brigades might be manufactured by veterans’ groups for their own use, but are not on general sale in the same way, despite the brief wartime cult status of units such as the Tigers (1st Guards Brigade), 4th Guard Brigade (from Split), 112 Brigade (from Zadar) or 101 Brigade (from Zagreb). The songs produced in honour of these units during the war have not appeared on any major compilations (even when they were performed by professionals like Mišo Kovač rather than by soldiers themselves), and are not in wide circulation online compared to NDH songs like *Evo zore, evo dana* or indeed *Jasenovac i Gradiška Stara*. Likewise, consumer goods are not produced to commemorate the Croatian Army as a whole (unlike e.g. the US Army). Homeland War insignia appear to have meaning to veterans, but not to teenagers, Thompson’s efforts notwithstanding.

The practice of ‘Ustaša’ saluting, being the focus of the domestic debate about Thompson, deserves further discussion. Newspaper photographs of the audience at Maksimir showed almost entirely groups of black-clad young people (often attractive girls) with U-logoed caps or flags, who were saluting or holding a Croatian flag with white, not red, in the top left corner of the šahovnica.²⁴⁸ These photographs may well have left the impression on readers who had not attended the concert that the audience had been made up exclusively of these teenagers and the politicians and celebrities who had been photographed with their families in the VIP area. Perhaps the more diverse audience in the western stand were less interesting – or perhaps it was harder for photographers to get up there than walk straight on to the standing area on the pitch. The standing area did contain many teenagers acting in the stereotypical way, as well as a core group of adult men who had positioned themselves next to a spur of the stage and often gave Ustaša salutes. While waiting for the concert to begin, this group started three call-and-response chants of ‘za

²⁴⁷ Ivić Pašalić’s new political party Jedino Hrvatska (Only Croatia) was also handing out red-and-white chequered scarves with the party name.

²⁴⁸ The colour of this square is one of the most contentious questions in Croatian iconography. The šahovnica on the contemporary state flag has a red square in the top left corner. The šahovnica on Pavelić’s flag had a white square in this position and this form was banned by the Yugoslav regime in 1945, although it had also been in use during the Habsburg era (Bellamy 1999:327) and is still tiled into the roof of St Mark’s church in Zagreb. Today a white square at top left often seems to be taken as a Herzegovinan and therefore ‘integralist’ symbol.

dom' and 'spremni' which spread across the stadium. The actions of the audience around me at this point suggested a lack of consensus about 'how to behave at a Thompson concert' and whether to participate in potentially transgressive behaviour. Some participants (the pair of teenage boys, the veteran and his family) immediately raised their right hands on 'spremni' with their fingers pressed together. Others did not raise their hands at all, and a third choice too spread up the stand as people observed their neighbours: you could raise your hand but keep your fingers spread, thus appearing to belong to the crowd without the complicity of performing 'a fascist salute'.

Certain audience members prone to saluting seemed to use the gesture as a sign of appreciation during the concert – perhaps analogous to gestures like the horned-fingers sign of metal fans. During *Reci, brate moj*, Thompson's song about post-war male comradeship, the two boys in front of me linked arms, and they gave right-handed salutes at two points of the song which contained potential Ustaša references (4.1.1) – the line about lighting a candle for those 'fallen for the home' ('za dom pali') and the warning that 'the thick fog will fall again' ('opet će se gusta magla spustiti'). Although one cannot claim that these were written into the song as deliberate Ustaša allusions, in this instance they certainly appeared to have created a complicit space where listeners could make the connection themselves.

Interestingly, another song with possible allusions to Ustaša history, *Moj dida i ja*, did not resonate with the boys. Although Thompson had spoken of his grandfather 11-12 years earlier as a member of the NDH army who had respected Ante Pavelić (4.3.2), this was never made an issue in reactions to the song, Thompson's lead single in 2007. Judging by people's observable levels of engagement (singing and movement), Thompson's relationship with his grandfather was of little interest to the boys, and they certainly did not use it as an opportunity to perform salutes. The couple on my left, however, enjoyed it as they did all Thompson's songs about family life. The most 'troubling' saluting incident (for those anxious to prevent the transmission of saluting practices) occurred during *Diva Grabovčeva*, a song about a murdered shepherdess from an Ivan Aralica novel. The veteran's daughter raised her right hand in a tentative salute (although the song's subject-matter had little connection with Ustašism), and her father made no attempt to stop it.

Overall, however, one still cannot call the concert a pro-Ustaša ritual. The most common audience chant was not 'za dom spremni' nor *Evo zore, evo dana*, but *Zovi, samo zovi*

(*Call, just call*), a 19th-century patriotic song²⁴⁹ – and even spectators who chose to sing *Evo zore* did not always seem to have a detailed grasp of Ustaša history. Unlike the word-perfect small group of skinheads chanting it at a tram stop outside Zagreb station, the two huddles of teenage boys I heard singing it to each other underneath the western stand before the rained-off Saturday concert faltered as soon as they had passed the well-known first couplet ‘evo zore, evo dana/evo Jure i Bobana’ (‘here comes the dawn, here comes the day/here come Jure and Boban’). If teenagers are drawn to celebrate the NDH because (as per Jelena Lovrić) of a poor history curriculum which failed to pay sufficient attention to Ustaša crimes, these boys’ education in *support* of the NDH had not been that much better. Moreover, the display of Ustaša symbols probably went against the organisers’ desired image of the concert – it had been suggested that security guards would prevent Ustaša insignia being taken into the stadium. However, visitors were not systematically searched for them, although some males (mainly wearing black) were frisked for weapons. (A female who was not wearing black, I presented my handbag for inspection anyway: security could not have been less interested.)

Audience members could participate in ‘Ustaša-celebrating’ behaviour with varying levels of commitment, from the most permanent (an Ustaša tattoo), via the evening-long (wearing an ‘U’ cap or a Pavelić T-shirt), to the most transitory (raising an arm during a wave of salutes). It is impossible to tell whether an arm raised for a few seconds represented a deliberate affirmation of the NDH’s place in Croatia’s history of statehood, a performance of friendship by carrying out the same bodily actions as the rest of one’s group, a wish not to attract attention by not saluting, an expression of enjoyment (like the horned gesture at metal concerts) of which parents and teachers are known to disapprove, a gesture copied from a parent, or any combination of the above. Middle-aged and older spectators (except war veterans attending in groups) were far less likely to salute. This might suggest their education under federal Yugoslavia had left them with a different impression of the NDH, or that salutes belong to an age-limited youth culture, or both.

Even though the Maksimir concert had hoped to present an image of a united, patriotic people, Thompson’s figure became divisive again after the concert was re-broadcast by HTV and reported in *The New York Times* (Wood 2007). This exposed his and his

²⁴⁹ Also known as *Oj, Hrvatsko mati* (*O Mother Croatia*) – and, using different place-names, as *Oj, Srbijo mati* (*O Mother Serbia*). This is not the only time the same music has been used to express opposing national ideologies. The *Evo zore* tune also existed as the Partisans’ *Na Kordunu grob do groba* (*Grave beside grave on Kordun*), and the march of young Croats and/or Ustaše in the song known as *Korak ide sa korakom* (*Step follows step*) or *Boj se bje* (*Battle is waged*) is attributed to King Peter’s Guard on a Serbian patriotic song *Marširala kralja Petra garda* (*King Peter’s Guard was marching*) set to the same music.

audience's behaviour to a larger number of viewers with a wider range of opinions. One line of criticism, including Ephraim Zuroff, held that HTV should never have shown the concert at all. The Croatian Serb leader Milorad Pupovac also protested on the grounds that HTV's subscribers included members of the Jewish and Serbian communities and therefore ought not to have broadcast a concert 'in which continuity between Ustaša values and today's Croatia is established in such an unconcealed way' (*Index* 2007). HTV had also been criticised in 2002 for showing a recording of the Poljud concert, with visible Ustaša symbols, as entertainment rather than in a news framework which could be editorialised (Ivančić 2002). HTV's editing of the Maksimir concert was also attacked for *not* showing Ustaša symbols in the audience, but the predominant frame of the 2007 criticism was whether an outsider like Zuroff had the right to 'direct HTV's programming', in the words of the acting programming director Željko Vela (Premec 2007).

Zuroff's call (2007) for Thompson to use his patriotic credibility to condemn the NDH and show that 'someone who constructs the homeland in democracy, accepting minorities and strengthening tolerance among different ethnic groups is a very honourable patriot' went unheard. In fact, Zuroff's intervention provoked another scandal when one member of the HRT Programming Council, Jadranka Kolarević, stated that several Jews had been key NDH officials and attacked Zuroff for not protesting that 'his country's army kills Palestinians in their country almost every day' (Matijević 2007). The 'Thompson case' once again became a standard question for interviewees during the round of summer political interviews, and journalists added SDP prime ministerial candidate Ljubo Jurčić's attendance at Maksimir to the list of apparently nationalistic actions out of keeping with SDP's social-democratic image.²⁵⁰

While *Jutarnji list* and *Globus* treated Thompson as a divisive symbol during this controversy, *Arena* presented him as a unifying figure who had assembled diverse sections of society (families, well-dressed gentlemen, mothers from Vukovar) and fandom (folk, rock). In *Arena's* worldview, *The New York Times* had emphasised the Ustaša symbols at the concert although 'domestic journalists at the concert' had said that only a few individuals had brought them and probably did not know what they meant (Hlup 2007). This description of the media reaction itself implied that the Croatian people could unite around

²⁵⁰ These included Jurčić stating that he would oppose Serbian investment in eastern Slavonia because '[i]t's known who committed crimes' and '[t]he wounds are still fresh' (Gatarić 2007); the new party leader Zoran Milanović telling an interviewer that he could understand people who had joined the Ustaše thinking they were fighting for Croatia; Jurčić telling another journalist that four of his uncles had fought for the NDH but not mentioning his father, who had been a Partisan; SDP holding a dinner at Sinj during the Alka. The incongruity of SDP's association with these cultural markers was summed up by one newspaper's headline 'Evo Ljube i Zorana', punning on a line of *Evo zore, evo dana*, 'evo Jure i Bobana'.

him while foreigners who did not understand their values would classify him as a Nazi, fascist or extremist. In fact, some Croatian commentators were the most vehement in rejecting Thompson's claim to the political mainstream, suggesting that Thompson had not united the Croatian people at all – unless 'the people' was to be politically defined or self-selecting.

7.3 Zagrebački orkestar

Mate Matišić's *Zagrebački orkestar*, a loose adaptation of a play by Jean Anouilh, was staged in July 2007 at the Opatovina summer stage near Zagreb cathedral and satirised the decay of traditional Zagreb city life by depicting a clash between pop-folk and cabaret. The play was set in a Zagreb coffee-house whose brashly-dressed, culturally-ignorant new owner decides to convert it to a folk music club and hires a pop-folk singer to retrain the female string ensemble.²⁵¹ Its staging strung together symbols of otherness and tastelessness: 'Mile', the new owner, wore the (stereo)typical tasteless but expensive outfit of male newly-composed folk singers (e.g. velvet clothes in clashing colours, heavy gold jewellery, loud shoes), cared only about profit, had an unspecified job to do with 'the transition', pinched the musicians' bottoms, fired a pistol into the air and thought that 'classical music' meant songs by Dražen Zečić, Mladen Grdović, Mate Bulić, Severina and Vlatka Pokos (high-selling but questionably-talented). The folk vocalist 'Sanela' reinforced the association of pop-folk with licentiousness with a series of trashy and revealing costumes, including a copy of Ceca Ražnatović's dress from her famous Ušće concert (often re-used as a stock photograph). Her strong Belgrade accent, her use of ekavica rather than ijekavica and her habitual use of 'bre' (well-known Belgrade slang) expanded the web of associations to include Serbia. The orchestra musicians complain about their reorientation but gradually adapt to the conventions of 'turbofolk' performance by learning to perform several songs written by Matišić as parodies of pop-folk lyrics and arrangements.

Unlike the other two events discussed in this chapter, *Zagrebački orkestar* ostensibly foregrounded local and urban identity, although Sanela's character personified an undertone of the ethnic/linguistic otherness associated with 'turbofolk'. Press coverage of the show emphasised the incongruity of 'turbofolk' appearing in the culturally privileged site of Opatovina. A long article in *Arena* described the ensemble's preparations for

²⁵¹ Although exaggerated, the story was not completely far-fetched: one informant told me she knew four classically-trained musicians who ended up backing Danijela Martinović in the 1990s because (she implied) there was no demand for classical music then.

representing the turbofolk milieu. Matišić said that the show was about ‘the devastation of a world’ and that turbofolk songs were ‘destroying old Zagreb like a bulldozer’. The director, Dražen Ferencić, had visited the folk club Ludnica and called it ‘a real cultural shock’ which ‘looked as if we’d suddenly found ourselves in [Emir] Kusturica’s film *Underground* [a chaotic representation of hedonism, corruption and folk music in Serbia]’. The female cast, readers were told, ‘had not gone to clubs but mainly informed themselves about turbofolk by watching TV Pink’, the notorious Serbian TV channel – although one actress, from Dubrovnik, said she had just had to listen to local donkeys to work out how to sing it. The article even related that skinheads had thrown stones at a rehearsal when they heard the songs written in ekavica – an incident one actress put down to the disappearance of ‘fine Zagreb’ which had stopped the youths understanding the role of the theatre (Ivić 2007). Another feature in *Tena* asked the actresses for their own thoughts about turbofolk. None of them, ‘of course’, listened to it themselves, although two or three had ‘happened’ to encounter it on evenings out (*Tena* 2007).

The shows’ narrative about folk clubs in Zagreb was inconsistent with the history of their development – although that was hardly the point. Rather than simply emerging during the post-socialist transition, folk clubs had been open in Zagreb as far back as the early 1970s, when Dragica Brkić had been performing in them (Hudelst 1995). Representing them as new arrivals cast them as an entirely new phenomenon produced by the profit-seeking orientation of post-socialist society, and attached their origin to the east – specifically an east which speaks ekavica and says ‘bre’. A real vocalist in Sanela’s position would also have been far more likely to come from Bosnia-Herzegovina (perhaps yet another instance of Bosnia being ignored because it would complicate the most evocative eastern other). Interestingly, the women’s orchestras now being idealised in 2007 as a symbol of old-fashioned Zagreb civility had caused their own cultural problems in old-fashioned Zagreb itself: in 1937 several such orchestras were reported for immorality, and their members were banned from sitting with tavern guests or using private booths (Ceribašić 2001:32–3). Indeed, the suspicions that some 1930s female orchestras were a front for prostitution seemed much the same as the contemporary suspicions about female folk vocalists (pejoratively ‘pevaljke’), on which *Zagrebački orkestar* played for humorous effect.

Of the three audiences observed in this chapter, this one probably agreed most successfully on the conventions of their behaviour. In keeping with the subjectivity of theatrical spectatorship, audience members expressed their appreciation through applause

and laughter. At least at this performance, the moments which provoked the most laughter seemed to be those which most successfully epitomised the mismatch between turbofolk and Zagreb-ness – communicated in almost every instance by a joke about ekavica.

Besides the comic juxtaposition of Zagreb kajkavica dialect and Serbian ekavica when one character resignedly wanted to ‘know what... we’re singing [znamo kaj... pevamo]’ (6.2.1), several other jokes also played on ethno-linguistic difference. Mile failed to recognise that the folk song *Lepi ti je Zagreb grad* (*Zagreb’s beautiful*) used kajkavian and thought it must be a turbofolk song in ekavica, so promptly sang it as one. Sanela confused Ante Gotovina with the Croatian composer Jakov Gotovac, at which one angry violinist clarified Gotovac had written ‘*Ero s onoga svijeta – svijeta!*’,²⁵² stressing the vowel which marked her language as Croatian not Serbian. Two well-dressed women in their sixties played on the comic tension themselves as they got up for the interval and one said to the other in ekavica ‘do you know where you’re sitting? Girl? [gde sediš? Devojka?]’ – and both burst into laughter.

Watching the performance at the end of my last stay in Zagreb and laughing at the absurd kajkavica/ekavica combinations myself forced me to reflect on how my own subjectivity had changed during my fieldwork. Spending months living in Zagreb, listening to other residents and consuming local news had exposed me to many examples of things ‘wrong’ with the contemporary city, even though I had no memory/myth of ‘how things had used to be’ in Zagreb for a referent. Rather than treating every single site as a location for observation, I had developed ideas of places where I felt ‘comfortable’ and ‘at home’ and even begun to feel while not directly carrying out research that I should be sharing others’ ideas about how Zagreb was changing for the worse. The play’s tone sat a little more uneasily when I attempted to relate it to my own common-sense experience by wondering how an equivalent of its ethnic comedy would have been received in the UK (then reproached myself for applying British socio-cultural standards to my evaluation rather than grounding my response in local understandings). Yet, as an audience member observed by others, none of these thoughts affected others’ impression of the event, since I did not express them bodily. By laughing and applauding, I contributed to the group’s performance of approval, and this formed the extent of my ‘participation’.

²⁵² Watching the scene I was convinced they would go on to ridicule Thompson, who had famously included *Ero* in a song; however, neither Thompson nor patriotic showbusiness were mentioned in the play, even though music critics tend to include him in the turbofolk mindset.

Conclusion

Nicholas Abercrombie and Brian Longhurst (1998) have intervened in audience theory by suggesting that the mass media have habituated contemporary audiences to scrutiny so that – in everyday life as well as large events – they go about their actions with a ‘narcissistic’ attention to how they are perceived. Their argument is weaker for not being historicised (Crawford 2004:26–7), but it is still useful to think about how audiences and the media affect each other, particularly in light of the Croatian media’s complicity in attempting to restructure social relations by promoting particular narratives of identity. These observations deal with live audiences, but sometimes the live audience may not even be the primary addressees of an event – at the waterpolo doček, for instance, the crowd were asked to let go of their balloons because they were getting in the way of the cameras recording HTV’s live feed. Even though the crowd had chosen to attend for their own personal reasons (celebrating a national sporting victory; watching a concert; getting away from school...) and were making some sort of meaning from the celebration as they took part, they were also instrumentalised to create the on-screen impression of an exciting mass event in the symbolic centre of the capital city.

Academic literature on the media and spectacle is often pessimistic, in the tradition of Jean Baudrillard (1998) and Guy Debord (1983): Douglas Kellner (2003:12) thus draws on Debord to argue that media spectacles perpetuate ‘hegemonic configurations of corporate and state power’ while embodying social values and dramatising conflicts. The positive Durkheimian reading of spectacles integrating society when people watch them (Dayan and Katz 1992) makes even more assumptions about the unanimity of audience dispositions. David Kertzer (1988) leaves much more space for agency in arguing that audiences are performing an attachment to common symbols rather than engaging in shared belief. However, ritual participants and spectacle audiences also need to cope with possible disagreements about symbols, as during the wave of salutes at Thompson’s Maksimir concert. Spreading one’s fingers while raising one’s hand was a compromise which enabled enough bodily movement to take part in behaviour which was constituting the audience as a group but did not amount to the more stigmatised behaviour of a full right-handed salute, yet avoided the demonstrative refusal of not raising one’s hand at all. It would be tempting to say that the momentary confusion dramatised an ongoing sense of not knowing what to do with the Ustaša past – something which is usually an abstraction but for a moment demanded an immediate bodily response. Certainly nobody (that I could see) challenged the salutes – after all, it is well-known (thanks to years of media reporting) that that sort of

behaviour should be expected at a Thompson concert. If Kertzer's argument is to hold, the concert must have involved some lowest common denominator of symbols on which participants *could* agree – even if that was just Thompson's music itself.

These chapters' events were 'flagged' rather than routinised performances of an identity narrative, and analysing them might depart from the emphasis on implicit/banalised narratives in other chapters. Live performance is nonetheless an inseparable component of the field for popular music; indeed, for many listeners the social experiences surrounding live performance/spectatorship are what popular music is *for* (5.3). Observing them helps to go beyond a solely narrative focus and incorporate embodied practices into the analysis. However, narratives and embodiment influence each other: Bourdieu's notion of habitus (1977) suggests that embodied practices are themselves structured by common-sense notions and narratives about the field of practice in which one operates. The relationship can work in the other direction too, as the observation of embodied practices produces new personal and media narratives – for instance the iterative process which has produced the dominant media representation of Thompson concerts based on repeated (selective) observation of audience behaviour.

All three events in this chapter could be seen as sites for acting out narratives of identity and the boundaries that symbolise them. Yet maybe the most effective restatements of those boundaries and narratives happen on the fringes of spectatorship – like the ekavica joke during the interval at *Zagrebački orkestar*. There, two audience members had internalised the linguistic boundary (through many experiences, this just being the latest) so well that they reproduced it without any crowd attention/scrutiny and took meaningful pleasure in doing so. This might suggest that things happening on stage are not always the most 'interesting' aspect of a performance – as Renato Rosaldo (1993:12) implies when he argues that, much as anthropologists like to study 'repetitive events' in 'visibly bounded arenas', those are not always where the greatest depth occurs. However, the marginal incident also shows the limitations of participant observation for a wider synoptic analysis: as a participant-observer at (say) the waterpolo doček I can recall and analyse as much detail as I like about what was going on around the Markuševac fountain, but I have no idea what might be happening on the steps by the marketplace or the various spaces on the square which different groups have taken as their meeting-places. Besides, what we are observing are in large part people who have already associated themselves with (their interpretation of) an event by turning up in the first place (or they would not have invested the necessary time and money), even though in a crowd of thousands not every participant

will be equally happy to be there.²⁵³ The experience of audience membership therefore may not actually change many minds.

Besides the limitations of participant observation in general, there were also my limits as a participant-observer to be taken into account. As sceptical as one might be of Connerton's view of unanimity or agency, his attention to internalised conventions about movement as an instantly-recognisable marker of belonging or non-belonging are harder to dismiss. In conversation I might have seemed to be a cultural 'insider', thanks to linguistic fluency and the ability to understand culturally-specific symbolic references and use them in my own speech. Where movement rather than language was involved, however, I was an obvious outsider, without the unconsciously-acquired knowledge of how to dance (or even where to stand to do what in the post office). After so much time spent researching and writing about the east (that is to say the 'eastern east'...) as a fundamental boundary-symbol in narratives of Croatian identity, it felt somewhat ironic to experience my own non-Croatianness through not knowing how to dance a quintessentially 'eastern' symbol.

²⁵³ Witness the array of excuses for people ending up in 'turbofolk' clubs (5.3).

8 Conclusion

This research began with a set of nation-centric questions about the recent history of popular music, identity and politics in Croatia, some embryonic ideas about how the research could let one reflect on south-east European cultural history or popular music studies in general, and little idea of how much material I would end up gathering without being able to use. The simplest questions have been answered in the chapters themselves: detailed case-studies have shown how the nation and its boundaries were defined and contested through the production of musical texts (a process which incorporates not just music-making but the meaning-making work of later intermediaries), and how the post-Tudman state's withdrawal from deliberately constructing a new national musical identity created a cultural field structured instead by informal protectionism and market-driven responses to emerging political issues (notably the controversy over ICTY indictments). The discursive practice of narrating one's own relationship to various collectives by using particular musical symbols (genres, performers) as reference-points is as strong as Stef Jansen (2005a) found it ten years before me – although this discourse was usually applied to the collective of informants' towns or cities rather than the abstract nation, and (if we are to think about 'anti-nationalism') the 'nationalism' of others often seemed to be most objectionable because of its effect on one's own environment (for one informant, for instance, it meant she was reluctant to have children because of what they would be taught in school).

Perhaps the greatest difference between Jansen's field and mine is that since then the othered so-called 'nationalists' have increasingly used music to respond to the discourses Jansen wrote about (while the institutional power to speak, especially at HRT, is far less often used to restate the 1990s presidential narrative – witness the furore caused in 2008 when Domagoj Burić attempted to revive a commemorative practice that would have been entirely unremarkable ten years before). Sometimes this has been done by resorting to existing historical myths about the fundamental divisions of Croatian society: Thompson's comments (in songs and interviews) about his detractors have largely remained within the discourse that Croats are divided into true patriots and untrustworthy Communists. Sometimes the talking-back comes from directly lived experience: as if the lyrics of Shorty's *Heroji danas* were not themselves expressive enough about people who thought he was a 'peasant' because he took pride in the wartime sacrifices made near his hometown, the

video included a direct challenge to the music critic who had questioned whether Shorty even belonged to hip-hop any more.

Treating the representations of identity which emerged during this research as narratives enabled an analysis of texts and their contexts from a standpoint which views identity as the product of communication. The historical and political background to the emergence and popularity of these musical texts acknowledges the need for cultural historians to supplement their readings of texts with wider 'source criticism' (P Burke 2004:21). A focus on narratives is not to say that recent history is *only* a set of narratives as if the events had not had real-world consequences; rather, it is to acknowledge the 'distinct ideological and even specifically political' (White 1990:ix) choices and implications involved in relating any narrative. Groups tell stories about themselves and others, and so do individuals; sometimes, joining in or commenting on a story about a group adds meaning to the ongoing reflexive narrative of oneself. My own narrative too has been shaped by authorial choices: the thesis-as-a-story and the story-of-the-thesis both entail selection and omission, all the more when there are university word-limits to respect.

Benjamin Perasović (2001:12) once asked whether it was appropriate to translate cultural studies theories such as the concept of subcultures 'from Brixton to Zapruđe'. Perasović concluded that it was (as long as one treated subcultures as dynamic groups), but as historians we still need to ask whether concepts from western-based popular music studies can help understand a post-socialist, post-conflict environment whose music industry developed from a European schlager model (see Vuletić 2006). Some ideas, such as the debate over theorising independent labels (Negus 1992; Hesmondhalgh 2002) or some theorisations of music and politics (Street 2002), are hard to detach from the politico-economic characteristics of western Europe or north America. Croatian 'independents' had a different relationship to the music industry (and para-state) than their British counterparts, and indeed the 'para-state' itself (being something much more direct than cultural studies' ideas about hegemony) does not have an obvious British equivalent. However, more general theories about taste remain valid, not least because of the influence of western sociology in Croatia.²⁵⁴ Current thinking about subculture in popular music studies recognises that the original concept reified the term without ethnographic understanding of subcultural members (Webb 2007). Sarah Thornton (1995) considered that subcultures only existed because media constructed them, and Andy Bennett (1999) has argued (after comparative research in Germany and Britain) that a fixed idea of

²⁵⁴ Prica (1991) on the rock/folk opposition directly applied Dick Hebdige's *Subcultures* (Hebdige 1979).

subculture does not let researchers treat identity as constructed and fluid. Nonetheless, both some of Perasović's informants (2001:154) and mine used 'subculture' themselves as a category to think with. Perhaps we should treat subculture as we do nation, race or gender: its emic use in making sense of the world should be recognised where it exists, but its use as a tool of analysis should not be uncritical.

In my case, translating theoretical concepts from Brixton to Zapruđe also involved a physical translation from London to Trstik, Ravnice, Britanac and Slavonia. Many encounters during my fieldwork prompted me to interrogate how my own background might be affecting my experiences: after all, how the community understands you and your role influences what data you receive (Fonarow 2006:16). The abortive folk-club excursion and some of my experiences in crowds brought it home most forcefully – would the saluting teenage boys at the Thompson concert have altered their behaviour if they had known a British researcher was sitting behind them (or would they just have saluted *more*)? – but I also confronted the issue in more subtle ways. I often found, for instance, that informants (particularly in their twenties) asked me about the London music scene and the best places to go out – in effect asking me to narrate my own social/cultural engagement just as they were narrating theirs to me. I sometimes encountered the misconception that I had some Croatian ethnic origin, since I spoke the language well, understood cultural reference-points and had a first name with a Croatian equivalent. I corrected this whenever it came up, not wanting to benefit from intimacy I was not 'entitled' to, but not everyone asked about my family background and I may unwittingly have left some with a false impression. In acknowledging these questions, I hope to have gone some way towards accounting for my own positionality in the way encouraged by Renato Rosaldo (1993). If I do not go as far as Rosaldo in narrating my own feelings of depression, embarrassment and alienation in the field, this is partly because I never (thankfully) experienced anything as traumatic, and partly because my strongest negative emotions were more the 'fault' of things going on in London, not the field.

Researching popular culture in a place like Croatia at this moment in time produces an inescapable tension between applying post-conflict paradigms and treating it as just another place to do cultural studies. The continuing effects of the war, especially in the former front-line regions, should not be underestimated, and sometimes they are still directly relevant in understanding aspects of Croatian culture (such as the latest inflections of historical memory). Indeed, studying popular culture may even help us understand why outsiders' post-conflict policies have had so little effect. On other occasions it can

nonetheless be valuable to use tools which have little or nothing to do with ‘post-conflictiness’, such as the more nuanced understanding of east/west constructions that can be drawn from world-music scholarship and the paradox of ‘oriental R&B’. ‘Nationalism’ is not always the only conceptual game in town – although it still makes for an expedient keyword. Yet this should not be a reason *not* to study the intersection of music and politics – from which David MacFadyen has distanced himself in his studies of Russian estrada music on the grounds that a viewpoint where ‘[p]olitics colours everything’ (2002b:3) just reproduces Cold War rhetoric about Soviet society. On the contrary, the work of Stuart Hall (1996), Michael Billig (1995) and John Thompson (1995) – among others – on ideology in long-established democracies shows that politics can be implicated in culture everywhere. My choice to research in Croatia is not intended to depict the country or the region as part of some far-away sphere where nationalism and intolerance happen.

Nina Glick Schiller (2008) has recently questioned whether ‘methodological nationalism’ – scholars’ tendency to do research and think on a country-by-country basis – is undermining our capacity to understand cultural practices in a world where products and lives often flow through more than one country. In what used to be (and sometimes still resembles) the common cultural marketplace of Yugoslavia, this is certainly a concern: Croatian sources on their own say a lot, but not everything, about how Croatian music has been used as a resource to narrate identity. Researching in Croatia I could not, for instance, come to a full understanding of how ethnopolitically-informed cultural struggles in Bosnia-Herzegovina have affected the activities of Croatian musicians there: e.g. in 2007 Thompson was forced to cancel a performance in Sarajevo to mark the tenth anniversary of the papal visit and the Bosnian federal broadcaster interrupted a transmission of a Matija Vujica performance when she whipped out a Croatian flag on stage. Without an appreciation of the cultural politics in Bosnia as a whole, Sarajevo and Neum which preceded these events, I felt unable to comment on them (although the Croatian media kept me well-informed about what Bosnian Croat politicians had to say about it all).

One thing a popular music historian can count on is the fast pace of change. Croatian music is no exception: Stef Jansen’s research (2005a) on musical symbolism in anti-nationalist discourses did not need to mention Thompson, who when Jansen did his fieldwork was only one of several minor stars whose careers had been advanced by the war; Benjamin Perasović’s work (2001) on youth subcultures has nothing to say about folk, even though value-judgements based on ‘rural origins’ and consumption patterns were part of certain groups’ discursive toolkits (2001:179). Popular music is a quickly-evolving

commodity, with a commercial logic based on fashion and (supposed) innovation. Whatever scholarly paradigm the next researcher of Croatian music uses, s/he will undoubtedly encounter some central phenomenon or other which was marginal to or absent from the field when I did my own research and therefore is just as marginal or absent from my own text. I beg his/her forgiveness if it was actually happening under my nose all the time.

Lastly (to return to the earliest starting-points of my own research), it goes without saying that any outsider researching music in Croatia is indebted to the expertise and depth of insider scholars: without the work of Naila Ceribašić, Ruza Bonifačić, Svanibor Pettan, Reana Senjković, Sanja Kalapoš and Benjamin Perasović (to name but a few) on particular topics, I would never have known how interesting a study of Croatian popular music as a whole would be, nor what to ask about it. Engaging with Croatian ethnology as an outsider (given Croatian ethnologists' strong interest in insider/outsider dynamics) has often seemed a rather humbling task. I am not asking everyone to agree with my constructivist approach or my conclusions, but if nothing else I hope my data-gathering might prove useful. A final word of thanks should go to another set of experts: my informants (be they interviewees in the field or recommenders of music or YouTube links at home). Without their generosity in opinions, materials and time, this thesis would never have got off the ground.

References

Appendix 1: Playlist

For readers unfamiliar with the songs I refer to, they can all be accessed easily online through YouTube. Rather than provide a list of links which may have become outdated (a particular copy of a video can disappear if a user leaves the site), the reader is advised to search YouTube for the artists/titles below (or indeed for any others mentioned in the text).

Extremely popular songs often appear on YouTube in a variety of qualities and formats. A professionally-produced video, or failing that a recording of a professionally-staged television performance, is more useful (for these purposes) than mobile-phone concert recordings or ‘montages’ where users have edited video from many sources with the song as an accompaniment.

Chapter 2

Tomislav Ivčić: *Stop the war in Croatia*

Hrvatski Band Aid: *Moja domovina*

Đuka Čaić: *Hrvatine*

Jura Stublić: *E, moj druže beogradski; Bili cvitak*

Miroslav Škoro: *Ne dirajte mi ravnice* (the Zlatni dukati version is widely viewable too)

Thompson: *Bojna Čavoglave; Prijatelji; Lijepa li si*

Chapter 3

(tamburica) Rajko Dujmić: *Leina*

Gazde: *Još i danas zamiriše trešnja*

(dance) Ivana Banfić: *Šumica*

(ča-val) Alen Vitasović: *Gušti su gušti*

(Međimurje ethno) many songs by Lidija Bajuk and/or Dunja Knebl

(folk-pop crossover) Magazin: *Suze biserne*

(alternative rock; 1999 elections) Majke: *Vrijeme je da se krene*

Chapter 4

Thompson: *Geni kameni; Moj dida i ja*

Thompson and Miroslav Škoro: *Reci, brate moj*

Miroslav Škoro: *Sude mi; Svetinja*

Niko Bete: *Ante, Ante*

Shorty: *Dođi u Vinkovce; Heroji danas*

Tomislav Bralić: *Croatijo, iz duše te ljubim* (also an example of popularised klapa music)

Chapter 5

Severina: *Mala je dala; Moja štikla* (beware the animated parody)

Let 3: *Ero*

Edo Maajka: *Prži*

Chapter 6

Dino Merlin and Ivana Banfić: *Godinama*

Tijana Dapčević: *Sve je isto, samo Njega nema* (endless ex-Yugoslav in-jokes)

Neda Ukraden: *Zora je*

(Eurovision) Put: *Don't ever cry*

Doris Dragović: *Marija Magdalena*

(oriental R&B) Ivana Kindl: *Strastvena žena*

Nina Badrić: *Imati pa nemati*

(emblematic Serbian pop-folk singers) Seka Aleksić; Mile Kitić; Jelena Karleuša; Ceca

Ražnatović; Indira Radić

Chapter 7

Baruni: *Neka pati koga smeta* (aka *Hrvatska je prvak svijeta*)

Žiga: *Ljubav se ne trži*

Appendix 2: List of abbreviations

BJUH	<i>Bilo jednom u Hrvatskoj</i>
BK	Karić Brothers (private Serbian television channel)
CMA	Croatian Music Aid
CMC	Croatian Music Channel
CR	Croatia Records
DRM	digital rights management
DTS	<i>Dajem ti srce</i>
DUV	<i>Dođi u Vinkovce</i>
EC	European Community
EKV	Ekaterina Velika (Serbian rock band)
EMDB	<i>E, moj druže beogradski</i>
EMN	<i>E, moj narode</i>
ET	Electro Team
EU	European Union
FRJ	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1992–2003, later Serbia–Montenegro)
HB	Croatian Bloc
HDZ	Croatian Democratic Union (government 1990–2000, 2003–)
HGU	Croatian Musicians' Union
HOS	Croatian Defence Force (HSP militia during Homeland War)
HP	Hrvatski pleter (military song festival 1995–2000)
HRF	Croatian Radio Festival (pop festival 1997–)
HRT	Croatian Radio and Television (state/public broadcaster)
HSLs	Croatian Social–Liberal Party (coalition partners 2000–02)
HSP	Croatian Party of Right (oppositional far-right party)
HTV	Croatian Television (division of HRT)
HVIDRA	Croatian Disabled Homeland War Veterans' Association
HVO	Croatian Defence Council (Bosnian Croat army)
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia
IDS	Istrian Democratic Assembly (regionalist party)
JGS	<i>Jasenovac i Gradiška Stara</i>
JNA	Yugoslav National/People's Army
JRT	Yugoslav Radio–Television
LLS	<i>Lijepa li si</i>
LN	<i>Lijepom našom</i>
MD	<i>Moja domovina</i>
MHJ	Melodies of the Croatian Adriatic (pop festival 1993–2002)
MOR	middle-of-the-road (music)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NCFM	newly-composed folk music
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NDH	Independent State of Croatia (1941–45)
NR	Narodni radio (private music radio station)
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe
OSS	<i>Od stoljeća sedmog</i>
PEN	an international writers' organisation
PMS	popular music studies
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RBM	<i>Reci, brate moj</i>
RS	Republika Srpska (Serb entity of Bosnia-Herzegovina)
RSK	Krajina Serb Republic (Croatian Serb entity in Homeland War)
RTL	a private TV channel (franchise of Radio-Television Luxembourg)
RTS	Radio-Television of Serbia (Serbian state broadcaster)
RTV Belgrade (etc.)	Radio-Television Belgrade
SDA	Party of Democratic Action (leading Bosniak party in Bosnia)
SDP	Social Democratic Party (coalition partners 2000–03)
ST	<i>Slobodni tjednik</i>
STWIC	<i>Stop the war in Croatia</i>
TBF	The Beat Fleet (hip-hop collective from Split)
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNTAES	United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia
VL	<i>Večernji list</i>
ZAVNOH	Territorial Anti-Fascist Council of the National Liberation of Croatia
ZS	<i>Za slobodu</i>

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